

# **Community Assistantship Program**

**The Dakota Women's March**

Prepared in partnership with  
Dakota Commemorative March

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# **The Dakota Women's March**

## **The Original Route**

**Research done on behalf of  
The Dakota Commemorative March  
Summer 2006**

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## INTRODUCTION

My name is Becky Weinberg and I am a graduate student at the University of Minnesota where I am working toward a Master's in English Literature. I am a white woman of European descent. The report that follows is the result of a project I began in June 2006. My assignment was to discover, if possible, the actual route that was taken by the Dakota women, children, and men who, as a result of the Dakota War of 1862, were forced by the U.S. military to march to Fort Snelling, where they were put into an encampment.

When I began this project, I had never heard of the Dakota War of 1862, or of the marches the Dakota were forced to take in November of that year. I think that the fact that the whole of the history of these events were new to me helped me to keep an open mind as I had no predetermined ideas about what had happened. I do know that it was a benefit to be able to change my mind about things as I worked to try to find the route of the march. Now, after the work has been done, I feel that I have gained a great deal of knowledge of the events that took place during this time, and have gotten to understand something of the dynamics that were affecting the area of the conflict.

When I began this project, I had slim hopes of uncovering a brand new piece of evidence that no one had ever seen before that would pin down a definitive route of the march. More realistically, I set out to find more information, to gather evidence related to the route of the march, and ultimately to attempt to make an educated guess of the route. I did not find any evidence that defines the route in a completely definitive way. However, I have collected a considerable amount of material that I believe allows for some productive speculating. The material that follows was obtained through a search of the available archives of published material and unpublished personal documents that are almost exclusively from a white

perspective. Information from the Dakota oral tradition is to be collected in another phase of the project.

In the following pages, I will present my findings in several ways. First, I have written a narrative that presents the information I have found related to the route of the march, quoting the relevant material. I have created an annotated bibliography which includes a citation for each piece of material I used, as well as a brief description of the contents of that material, and why I included it here, i.e. why it was relevant. Some of the material I have included here is not directly related to the route of the women's march, which was my primary interest. Following the annotated bibliography is an appendix of all the material I found and transcribed. This section is for the person who wishes to read, in its entirety, the information that I found relevant to my study and to the related events. Finally, you will find photocopies of original material that I obtained when possible. As you will see, I have indicated in the annotated bibliography, as well as in the appendix which items I was able to obtain a photocopy of.

In my searching, I came across a number of pieces of information relating to other events of the months of August-November 1862. As the women's march, and the prisoner's march were related, as I searched, I came across a considerable amount of material about the prisoner's march. I also found a number of eyewitness accounts of the hanging of the 38 condemned prisoners in Mankato on December 26, 1862. In the interest of giving interested persons access to this information, I have included these items in my compilation, although I recognize that they do not relate directly to information I was seeking about the route taken by the women's march.



## THE MARCH

On October 7, 1862, Major General John Pope wrote a letter to his subordinate, Brigadier General Henry Hastings Sibley about what should be done with the Dakota Indians after the end of the war with the Dakota. He wrote:

I desire you to disarm and send down to Fort Snelling all the Indians, men, women and children, of the Sioux tribe upon whom you can lay your hands. I shall keep and feed for the winter such as are not hung and shot for their crimes, so that with the sanction of Congress obtained this winter they can all be removed beyond the limits of the State, in the spring.<sup>1</sup>

On October 10th, Pope reiterated his desire for the remaining captured Indians to be brought to Fort Snelling.

It only remains for us to deal with the Indians. All who are guilty whatever be the number should in my judgment be hung, and will be so if the Commission condemn them to that penalty. The whole of the Indians, men, women and children, should be brought as prisoners to the lower agency where the culprits must be executed in the presence of the whole tribe.

When the culprits have been executed, all the Sioux must be brought to Fort Snelling as prisoners until the Govt. decides what disposition to make of them.<sup>2</sup>

## WHEN DID THEY LEAVE?

The plan to move the uncondemned Dakota Indians to Fort Snelling was put into effect. Lieutenant Colonel William Rainey Marshall, a future governor of Minnesota, was assigned to lead about 1,700 Dakota women, children and uncondemned men to Fort Snelling. Along with about 300 soldiers, Marshall started out from the Lower Agency on the trek to Fort Snelling.

Most of the sources I've seen name November 7, 1862 as the date the march left from the Lower Agency. In a letter dated November 7, 1862, Isaac Heard, a member of General Sibley's expedition against the Dakota, and later the Recorder of the Military Commission, reported that

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<sup>1</sup> Pope to Sibley, dated October 7, 1862. *Letters received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. Minnesota Historical Society [hereafter MHS]. Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166.

<sup>2</sup> Pope to Sibley, dated October 10, 1862. *Letters received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166.

the movement of these Dakota had begun: “The Indian women and a few innocent males, numbering about 1,500 in all, broke camp and left for Fort Snelling this morning under charge of that brave and gentlemanly officer Lieutenant Colonel Marshall.”<sup>3</sup> Heard also cites the departure date as November 7th, 1862 in his book, *History of the Sioux War and Massacres of 1862 and 1863*:

On the 7th of November, Colonel Marshall, with the inmates of the Indian camp, about 1,500 in all, consisted of women and children, and a few innocent males, started to Fort Snelling. When the outrage broke out the Indians said that they would winter their squaws near St. Paul. The prediction was to be accomplished, but the fact was not to be as agreeable as supposed.<sup>4</sup>

Sergeant James Ramer, a soldier of the 7th Regiment, accompanied the prisoner’s march from the Lower Agency to Mankato. He wrote a narrative that was included in the official report of the conflict, now found in volume one of *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865*. Ramer wrote, “November 7th Lieutenant Colonel Marshall was put in command of a detachment (Captain Culver’s company of the Fifth and Folsom’s of the Eighth) and started to conduct the 2,000 friendly Indians to Fort Snelling.”<sup>5</sup>

Another reference to November 7th as the departure date of the women’s march can be found in an article from *The Saint Paul Daily Press*, dated Friday, November 14, 1862:

THE INDIANS AT THE FORT—Lieut. Col. Marshall, with his long train of Indian women and children, half-breeds and “good Indians,” arrived at the Fort yesterday. There are some forty or fifty full-blooded adult male Indians, and one or two hundred half-breeds, who are proved guiltless of the late atrocities. The rest are women and children; and in all, number over eighteen hundred persons. They marched all the way from Red Wood<sup>6</sup> since Friday last, attended by three companies of soldiers, the train being three or four miles in length.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “The Indian Expedition; Letter from General Sibley’s Camp. Interesting Account of the Indian Trials.” *The St. Paul Pioneer Democrat*. 21 November 1862. p. 3, col. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Heard, Isaac. *History of the Sioux War and Massacres of 1862 and 1863*. Harper and Brothers: New York, 1864. p. 240. MHS Call number: E83.86.H43 1864.

<sup>5</sup> *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 1*. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 353. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Red Wood was another name for the Lower Agency.

<sup>7</sup> “The Indians at the Fort.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 14 November 1862, p. 4, col. 1.

This article was published on November 14, 1862; therefore “yesterday” would have been November 13. This timing would make “Friday last” November 7, 1862.<sup>8</sup>

John Poage (J.P.) Williamson, a missionary that worked with the Dakota, also indicates in a letter that the march was going to leave on November 7th: “Nov. 6.—. . . I have learned that orders have been issued to convey all the Indians who have not been convicted to the neighborhood of Fort Snelling. They will probably take up their march tomorrow.”<sup>9</sup>

## CONTRADICTIONS IN DATES

One contradiction of this November 7, 1862 departure date came from a letter a soldier named Charles H. Watson wrote to his father.

Lower Agency Nov 5th, 1862

Dear Father I thought it best to write to you this afternoon because we are not a going to drill it is very windy The dust blows in clouds the prarie (sic) is kind of sandy and when the wind blows it is very disagreeable (sic) to be out side (sic) The Squass (sic) are going to leave here tomorrow to go below somewhere they are dealing out crackers to them there is one company and one piece of cannon went to the Fort to day (sic) and we are going tomorrow I think but we never know for certain until (sic) we are about ready to start so we don’t know until we start . . .<sup>10</sup>

Watson’s letter places the march’s departure date as November 6th, although he acknowledges that he never knows what will happen until the last minute. Another soldier, John Kingsley Wood, corroborates this departure date in his diary entry for November 6th, when he writes, “the most of the squaws started to day for St Paul[.] they had rations delt (sic) out to them before starting the Red Wing band getting their rations.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> I have included a calendar of November 1862 at the end of my report.

<sup>9</sup> John Poage (J. P.) Williamson to Selah Burr (S.B.) Treat, dated November 5, 1862. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: BA10/.A512b.

<sup>10</sup> Charles H. Watson to his father, dated November 5, 1862. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: P958. Handwritten letters often omitted punctuation such as periods or commas. I have tried to replicate the form in which they were written in my transcription.

<sup>11</sup> John Kingsley Wood Diary, dated November 6, 1862. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: A/ - W876.

Another contradiction of the November 7, 1862 departure date came from Samuel Brown, son of Minnesota pioneer Joseph Brown, and lay historian of the conflict.

On the 9th of November (1862), the uncondemned Indians and their wives and families, and the wives and families of the condemned and absent Indians, numbering 1,658 souls, were started off for Fort Snelling. Lieut. Col. Marshall of the Seventh regiment, Minnesota Volunteers, with an escort of three companies of soldiers being in command.<sup>12</sup>

## **WHEN DID THE MARCH ARRIVE?**

The majority of the primary sources I have seen establish the arrival date of the Dakota Women's March at Fort Snelling as November 13, 1862. Another of J. P. Williamson's letters confirms November 13, 1862 as the arrival date. His letter written on Friday, November 28, 1862, states, "I accompanied the Indian camp from the Lower Agency to this place where we arrived a week ago last Thursday."<sup>13</sup> This would indicate the arrival date as November 13, 1862.<sup>14</sup>

*The St. Paul Pioneer Press* also reports the arrival date as November 13, 1862, as per this news item published on November 14, 1862: "Lieut. Col. Wm. R. Marshall with a force of three hundred soldiers, arrived at Fort Snelling last evening, with eighteen hundred Indians, only forty of whom are men, the balance are women and children. The Colonel arrived in the city last evening, looking well."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Brown, Samuel. *In Captivity: The Experience, Privations, and Dangers of Samuel J. Brown and Others While Prisoners of the Hostile Sioux During the Massacre and War of 1862*. Washington D.C.: G.P.O., 1900 [?]. p. 11. MHS Call number: E83.86. B86 1897.

<sup>13</sup> J.P. Williamson to S.B. Treat, dated November 28, 1862. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: BA10/.A512b.

<sup>14</sup> See the November 1862 calendar I have included in the appendix.

<sup>15</sup> "City News." *The Saint Paul Pioneer Press*. 14 November 1862. p. 1, col. 4.

## WHO WAS ON THE MARCH?

In order to discover new information about the route of the march, I explored the personal papers of anyone that I believed was involved in the march proper, or was in the vicinity of the march and may have written something about it. This included the soldiers and missionaries that were on the march and other soldiers that were in Camp Sibley at the Lower Agency when the women's march left, most of who accompanied the prisoner's march to Mankato.

Lieutenant Colonel William Rainey Marshall, conducted the Dakota Women's March to Fort Snelling. *The Saint Paul Daily Press* published the following article in which Marshall made a request of the settlers of the Minnesota valley:

### A WORD FROM COL. MARSHALL

We have been shown a private letter from Lieut. Col. Marshall, in which, after referring to the fact that Gen. Sibley has intrusted him with the removal to Fort Snelling of those Indians who have been declared, by court martial, to be either friendly or guiltless of the late massacre, with a considerable body of women and children. He earnestly deprecates any molestation by inhabitants of the Minnesota Valley. Reports of threats to this effect have reached him, and we urge his appeal that no attempt will be made to execute them. Col. Marshall will have 300 troops under his command for the protection of his train. On this subject he adds:

I would risk my life for the protection of these helpless beings, and would feel everlastingly disgraced if any evil befell them while in my charge. Through the Press, I want the settlers to know that they are not the *guilty Indians* (some 300 of whom are to be executed at South Bend) but *friendly Indians, women and children*.

The people of the Minnesota Valley have too distinct a recollection of Col. Marshall's services in the Indian campaign not to respect his wishes as above expressed.<sup>16</sup>

This plea to the settlers was published on November 8, 1862; one day after the group likely left the Lower Agency. Marshall here uses very strong language in defense of the Indians in his charge, something that was not common in the newspapers at the time. It is notable that because of Marshall's reputation, this newspaper asks the public to respect his wishes.

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<sup>16</sup> "A Word from Colonel Marshall." *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 8 November 1862. p. 1, col. 3.

Samuel Brown was the son of a Minnesota pioneer and Indian agent Joseph R. Brown. He was one-eighth Dakota himself and a lay historian of the Dakota Conflict.<sup>17</sup> His written narration of the march gives the following example of the behavior of Lt. Col. Marshall:

#### A BRAVE MAN AND A BRAVE ACT

There was another incident that took place at Henderson which is worth mentioning. I refer to a brave and noble act by one of the bravest and noblest of men—Lieut. Col. Marshall, afterwards governor of Minnesota.

While the train was passing through the town one of the citizens with blood in his eyes and halfcrazed with drink rushed up with a gun leveled at Charles Crawford, one of the friendlies, and was about to fire, when “the bold charger of the plains.” Lieut. Col. Marshall, who happened along on horseback, rushed between them and struck down the gun with his saber and got Crawford out of the way, thus saving a life at the risk of his own.<sup>18</sup>

J. P. Williamson, a missionary who accompanied the march to Fort Snelling, wrote a letter from Fort Snelling on November 28, 1862. In this letter he comments on Lieutenant Colonel Marshall’s conduct:

I accompanied the Indian camp from the Lower Agency to this place where we arrived a week ago last Thursday. We were under the escort of three companies of soldiers in charge of Lieut. Col. Marshall, who exerted himself to the utmost to assist and protect his helpless charge. Notwithstanding it was a camp composed almost wholly of women and children; the indignation of the people of Minnesota against all Indians is so great that had they been in charge of almost any other of our officers, I do not doubt that they would have been mobbed and many of them killed. As it was they performed the march with much fear, and notwithstanding the guard of soldiers, they received sundry salutations in the form of stones and sticks, to say nothing of the curses which were heaped upon them from the doorways and hillsides.<sup>19</sup>

As reported above, Marshall was accompanied by three companies of soldiers which had been detached from their regular regiments. These were Captain McLarty’s Company D of the

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<sup>17</sup> *MHS Library Catalog*. “Joseph R. and Samuel J. Brown and family papers.” *Minnesota Historical Society*; accessed 7 August 2006. Available from [http://mnhs.mnpals.net/F/JXYSFKDLH4Q9IB9G125ASNCL13AYR2JL1QBJYN837BXC7IV6N8-02817?func=full-set-set&set\\_number=010938&set\\_entry=000005&format=999](http://mnhs.mnpals.net/F/JXYSFKDLH4Q9IB9G125ASNCL13AYR2JL1QBJYN837BXC7IV6N8-02817?func=full-set-set&set_number=010938&set_entry=000005&format=999).

<sup>18</sup> Brown, Samuel. *In Captivity: The Experience, Privations, and Dangers of Samuel J. Brown and Others While Prisoners of the Hostile Sioux During the Massacre and War of 1862*. Washington D.C.: G.P.O., 1900 [?]. p. 11. MHS Call number: E83.86. B86 1897.

<sup>19</sup> J.P. Williamson to S.B. Treat dated November 28, 1862. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: BA10/.A512b.

Eighth Regiment, Captain Folsom's Company C of the Eighth Regiment, and Captain Culver's Company B of the Fifth Regiment.<sup>20</sup>

*The Saint Paul Daily Press* cites the presence of Capt. McLarty and Captain Folsom's companies as having been on the march: "Col. Marshall has three companies of soldiers under him, escorting the Indians—Capt. McLarty's Fillmore county company, Capt. Ed. (sic) Folsom's Stillwater company, and one other."<sup>21</sup>

This "one other" may have been Captain Culver's Company B of the Fifth Regiment. I found a reference to his company's presence on the march in the narrative of Sergeant Ramer, that I have quoted above: "November 7th—Lieutenant Colonel Marshall was put in command of a detachment (Captain Culver's company of the Fifth and Folsom's of the Eighth) and started to conduct the 2,000 friendly Indians to Fort Snelling."<sup>22</sup>

According to *The Saint Paul Daily Press*, the march was also accompanied by a Major Galbraith, who was a former U.S. Indian Agent: "All the women and children and 'good Indians' were to be brought down to Fort Snelling by an expedition of Lieut. Col. Marshall, and accompanied by Major Galbraith."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> There is some evidence to suggest that the right wing of the Wisconsin 25th also accompanied the march. Nov. 28th—Fort Snelling, Minn. Arrived this noon. A few of the company still here, most of them come and gone. The right wing of our Reg't came down the Minnesota some days ago bringing with them 1,700 captured Sioux, wives, children, and old men and women of the hostiles.

Cooke, Chauncey H. "A Badger Boy in Blue: The Letters of Chauncey H. Cooke." *Wisconsin Magazine of History*. Madison 1920-21. v. 4, no. 1-4. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call Number: F576 .W8 v.4.

These letters also appear in a volume titled, *Soldier Boy's Letters to his Father and Mother*. Independence, WI: News-office, 1915. (MHS Call number: E601 .C77.) I was not able to corroborate this evidence elsewhere.

<sup>21</sup> "The Sioux at Fort Snelling." *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862, pg. 4, col. 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 1*. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 353.

<sup>23</sup> "News From Sibley's Camp." *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 8 November 1862, pg. 1, col. 3.

## CROSSING THE MINNESOTA RIVER

The point of departure of the march was the Lower Agency, which is on the southerly side of the Minnesota River. Fort Snelling, the endpoint of the march is on the northerly side. In order to get from the Lower Agency to Fort Snelling, the march was obliged to cross the Minnesota river. One of the biggest questions about the route of the march is where this crossing was made.

I found nothing definitive about how the river crossing was achieved, although I found a number of items that suggest several different alternatives. Early in my search, I stumbled across the letters of Charles H. Watson, a member of Company F of the Sixth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry who was at the Lower Agency in early November 1862.<sup>24</sup> While the item I found doesn't comment specifically on how the Dakota Women's March crossed the Minnesota River, it does suggest a possible alternative.

In a letter to his father, Watson provided a list of how many men were assigned to carry all of the company's equipment. In a postscript he added the following: "There is eleven teams for to carry the pontoon bridges which I forgot to mention when I was telling how many were going to go."<sup>25</sup> This concept of the pontoon bridge was intriguing to me as a means the military

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<sup>24</sup> On Nov 5, 1862, Charles H. Watson wrote the following letter to his father from the Lower Agency:  
Dear Father I thought it best to write to you this afternoon because we are not a going to drill it is very windy The dust blows in clouds the prarie (sic) is kind of sandy and when the wind blows it is very disagreeable (sic) to be out side (sic) The Squass (sic) are going to leave here tomorrow to do below somewhere they are dealing out crackers to them there is one company and one piece (sic) of cannon went to the Fort to day (sic) and we are going tomorrow I think but we never know for certain until (sic) we are about ready to start so we don't know until we start . . .

Charles H. Watson to his father, dated November 5, 1862. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: P958.

<sup>25</sup> Charles "Herb" Watson to his father, dated June 12, 1863, written from Camp Pope. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: P958.



had of crossing waters, and might warrant further investigation as to where and how these structures were used.<sup>26</sup>

Another alternative was suggested in a letter from General Sibley's camp published in the *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*, suggests that the ferry at the Lower Agency (also known as the Red Wood Agency) was in working order and in use at the beginning of November 1862:

The Indian Expedition  
Letter from Gen. Sibley's Camp

Camp Sibley, Red Wood Agency, November 1, 1862

To the Editor of the Pioneer.

We have now the most comfortable camping grounds that have fallen to our lot during the campaign. We are located on a high prairie, close to the Minnesota river, and wood and water are easily obtained.

The ferry has been put in running order and thereby furnishes an easy transit across the river for foraging parties, and to those going to Fort Ridgely. When we came up, we were obliged to cross at the Fort, which made the journey several miles longer...<sup>27</sup>

I also found a reference to the fact that there was a ferry at Fort Ridgely as well as at the Lower Agency as the letter I've just quoted suggests. In his *History of Company E of the Sixth Minnesota Regiment of Volunteer Infantry*, Alfred Hill recounts the following:

On the 18th of the month (September 1862) the expeditionary force took up the line of march from its base at Fort Ridgely. Crossing at the ferry near by, the route pursued was on the south side of the Minnesota River, fording the Red Wood at the usual place, and touching Wood Lakes about three miles from Yellow Medicine, which was reached on the 22nd.<sup>28</sup>

This would mean that there were working ferries at both Fort Ridgely and the Lower Agency.

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<sup>26</sup> I did find one other reference to a pontoon bridge being used to cross the Potomac River as part of military movements related to the Civil War. The item appeared in the *St. Peter Tribune* on November 20, 1862:

A pontoon bridge was commenced this morning at Berlin, some five miles below this point, for the purposes of crossing the Potomac with a little more speed than heretofore. From the manner in which they do their work, I am inclined to believe it will be finished by noon today.

"Reorganizing the Army." *St. Peter Tribune*. 20 November 1862. p. 2, col. 2.

<sup>27</sup> "The Indian Expedition." *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*. 14 November 1862. pg. 2, col. 3

<sup>28</sup> Hill, Alfred James. *History of Company E, of the Sixth Minnesota Regiment of Volunteer Infantry*. St. Paul: T. H. Lewis, 1899. p. 13. MHS Call Number: E515.5 6th .H.

During my research, I found a couple of mentions of groups that made the trip from the Lower Agency to Fort Ridgley, or the reverse trip from Fort Snelling to the Lower Agency, and none of them even mention the river crossing, much less mention that it was a hardship. James Ramer, a soldier on the prisoner's march, made the following diary entries in early November 1862.<sup>29</sup>

7th

To day is a fine day and every one is full of fun, this evening we received marching orders, to be ready to march at six oclock in the morning.

8th

We was on the march at sunrise  
we had a pleasant day  
we passed Fort Ridgley at noon  
we pitched our tents a six oclock  
the distance traveled to day is 23 miles.<sup>30</sup>

Ramer reports that the group that left the Lower Agency with the prisoner's group made it to Fort Ridgley by noon on the first day of their march. Having left that morning at six o' clock a.m., the prisoner's march made it to Fort Ridgley in about six hours, crossing the river at some point during that period of time.

Another alternative is that the women's march crossed the river immediately, at the Lower Agency, not by using the ferry or pontoon bridges, but by fording the river somehow. The poet and writer Henry David Thoreau made a steamboat trip up the Minnesota River in 1861. He wrote a very detailed account of this trip in a letter to his biographer, F. B. Sanborn.<sup>31</sup> The part of the letter that is relevant to the discussion of how to cross the Minnesota River is the part where Thoreau estimates how wide the river was at the Lower Agency.

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<sup>29</sup> Although Ramer was on the prisoner's march, and not on the women's march, I quote him here because this entry refers to how his group moved from the Lower Agency to Fort Ridgley, and how long it took them to cover that distance. Because of the lack of direct reporting about the route of the Dakota Women's March, I think that looking at the reports of the movements of others in the area at the time can provide important clues as to the most likely route that the women's march took.

<sup>30</sup> James Ramer diary. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M87.

<sup>31</sup> This letter is very detailed and it can be read in its entirety in the appendix.

Redwing Minnesota June 25th 1861

Mr. Sanborn,  
Dear Sir,

After spending some three weeks in and about St. Paul, St. Anthony, and Minneapolis, we made an excursion in a steamer some 300 or more miles up the Minnesota (St. Peter's) River, to Redwood, or the Lower Sioux Agency, in order to see the plains and the Sioux, who were to receive their annual payment there. . . (The river) was from 10 to 15 rods wide near the mouth and from 8 to 10 or 12 at Redwood. Though the current was swift, I did not see a 'rip' on it, and only 3 or 4 rocks. For 3 months in the year I am told it can be navigated by small steamers about twice as far as we went, or to its source in Big Stone Lake, and a former Indian agent told me that at high water it was thought that such a steamer might pass into the Red River.

A rod is a measure of length equal to 16.5 feet. Therefore, according to Thoreau, in June of 1861, the Minnesota was about 132 to 198 feet wide at the Lower Agency. However, it is important to recognize that the river would have narrowed later in the year, as the water level dropped, potentially making the river easier to cross.

It is well documented that the water level of the Minnesota River fluctuated during the year, being higher in the spring when fueled by the winter snowmelt and lower toward the end of the summer and in the fall. In the winter, it would ice over, making boat travel impossible.

In his book *The Minnesota: Forgotten River*, Evan Jones wrote that the Minnesota River, "was a capricious stream, and there were few years when it was navigable all summer long. The announcement of a timetable that might be adhered to was greeted with laughter. Nothing was more uncertain than a steamboat journey on the Minnesota."<sup>32</sup> The uncertainty of the navigability of the river was due to low water levels.

To manage the low water levels, boats were built that had been designed to run in shallow water. Jones relates one of these improvements in this note about a new boat:

To deal with the Minnesota, the rivermen had designed boats of shallow draft. In March, 1857, the *Equator* was described as "a truly Minnesota River boat. She is owned

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<sup>32</sup> Jones, Evan. *The Minnesota: Forgotten River*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962. p. 109. MHS Call Number: F614.M46 J6.

exclusively by citizens of Minnesota, and will be kept running for the accommodation of citizens in the dull season as well as in the more active. There are no Pittsburgh interests in the 'Equator' to direct her from the trade. The proprietors of the 'E' will have a boat in readiness at the commencement of the low water season that will require only a heavy dew to enable her to run."<sup>33</sup>

I came across a number of anecdotal references related to the problems of navigating the river. *The Minnesota Pioneer* published a column on Thursday, August, 12, 1852, that was very much concerned with the low water levels of the Minnesota River:

The old Doctor arrived on Friday. She had only a slight detention, and that was upon the bar two miles below town. She had a good freight, for both landings and Mendota. She brought a mail, but no especial news. A dry time of the river seems to be a dearth of everything else. . .

The Ben. Campbell steamboat company have just brought three like draught steamboats adapted to a low stage of water. . .

The Black Hawk and the Jenny Lind, which for the few weeks last past, have been spawning up the Minnesota, last week struck for deeper water. They took down a considerable number of passengers and at increased rates. The Campbell company are a going to ask 37 ½ cents per cwt. from Galena. In this case a rain would be to them, no blessing.<sup>34</sup>

An article in the *Minnesota History Quarterly* also references low water in the Minnesota River:

Continued low water in the years following the signing of the treaty of Traverse des Sioux greatly retarded the growth of steamboating. After the usual spring floods the Minnesota River would suddenly dry up and, notwithstanding the efforts of steamboats to rub their bellies over the innumerable sandbars that blocked the way, only a few score trips were made each season.<sup>35</sup>

I came across several letters printed in volume two of *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars* that refer to navigation on the Minnesota River. These references seem to be referring to when exactly the river would not be navigable because of water levels that were too low. I infer

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<sup>33</sup> Jones, Evan. *The Minnesota: Forgotten River*. New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962. p. 110-111. (

<sup>34</sup> "Minnesota Affairs: Steamboat." *The Minnesota Pioneer*. 12 August 1852. p. 2. col. 2.

I interpret this last item to mean that because the Campbell company was charging more money to bring passengers down, a rain would not be a blessing to them as they would not be able to charge as much per customer.

<sup>35</sup> "The Early History of Steamboating on the Minnesota River." *Minnesota History: A Quarterly Magazine*. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society. Vol. 11, no. 2. p 131. MHS Call Number: F614.M46 J6.

that prior experience with the river allowed these military men to predict when the river would go “out.”

The following two letters from General Pope to Major General Halleck address the ability to move troops via the Minnesota River, and Major Pope’s concern that the movement would need to take place before the river went too low.<sup>36</sup>

St. Paul, Minn. *Oct. 13, 1862. –10:40 a. m.*

Major General Halleck,

*General-in-Chief:*

Five regiments can be sent from this state by November 1. Please instruct me in time where to send them. The river closes about November 25...

Jno. Pope,

*Major General.*<sup>37</sup>

St. Paul, Minn. *Oct. 27, 1862. –10 p. m.*

Major General Halleck,

The river is very low, and from appearances will close by November 15...

Jno. Pope

*Major General.*<sup>38</sup>

## **WHERE DID THE MARCH GO?**

According to *The Saint Paul Daily Press*, the march went to Fort Snelling via Fort Ridgley and Henderson. The following item about the march was printed on November 13, 1862:

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<sup>36</sup> Initially, I wasn’t sure if the first letter dated Oct. 13, 1862 referred to the Minnesota or the Mississippi River, and if by “the river closes,” Pope was referring to the river icing over. But when I found the letter dated Oct. 17, 1862 I became convinced that the river Pope is referring to is the Minnesota. The Mississippi was unlikely to go so low as to become impossible to navigate, and because of its size, it was unlikely to freeze as early as November. The Minnesota, on the other hand was notorious for fluctuating water levels.

<sup>37</sup> *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 274. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005.

<sup>38</sup> *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 283. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005.

THE SIOUX AT FORT SNELLING—Lieut. Colonel Marshall is expected down to Fort Snelling to-day, with twelve or fifteen hundred Indians, principally women and children, who are to be quartered there until the intentions of the Government respecting them shall have been made known. They have marched all the way from Red Wood, via Fort Ridgley and Henderson.<sup>39</sup>

The route indicated here would mean that after the march left the Lower Agency, it either crossed the river at the Lower Agency, or it went along the southerly bank of the Minnesota River and crossed the river at Fort Ridgley.

Another direct reference to the march as having gone through Fort Ridgley is found in the diary of Thomas P. Gere. Gere was the First Lieutenant of Company B of the Fifth Regiment of Minnesota Volunteers and accompanied the women's march.<sup>40</sup> He made the following journal entry dated November 16, 1862:

The squaws, papooses etc. to the number of eighteen hundred have been removed hither, for what purpose I have seen no one who knows. We left Fort Ridgely (sic) on Saturday the 9th inst. as part of an escort to this train.<sup>41</sup> We arrived here Thursday at noon, and are on duty in this old fort once more.<sup>42</sup>

According to Gere, the march camped at Fort Ridgley on the night of November 8th, and left there on the 9th. These are the only 2 written sources that indicate exactly where the route went after leaving the Lower Agency and they both agree that the march went through Fort Ridgley.

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<sup>39</sup> "The Sioux at Fort Snelling," *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862. p. 4. col. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Company B of the 5th Regiment is referred to earlier in this report as Captain Culver's 5th Regiment.

<sup>41</sup> "Inst." means "instant," which means the writer is referring to a date in the current month. In this case Gere simply means Saturday the 9th of November.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Gere. Diary entry of November 16, 1862. From the William B. and Thomas P. Gere papers. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: P2434, box 2.

Gere has made an error in dates here. November 9, 1862 was not Saturday, but was Sunday. Due to this error, we do not know if he either meant that the march departed from Fort Ridgley on Saturday, November 8th, or on Sunday, November 9th.

## THE HENDERSON TO FORT RIDGLEY TRAIL

The *St. Paul Press* article of November 13, 1862 stating that the march had gone to Fort Snelling “via Fort Ridgely and Henderson” invites a brief discussion of the trail that connected these two places.<sup>43</sup>

Fort Ridgely, and all of Minnesota’s smaller military forts for that matter, depended on getting supplies from another source. *The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, published by the Sibley County Historical Society, details the role that Henderson played in shipping goods in the 1860s: “After Henderson was established in 1853<sup>44</sup> by Joseph Brown, it became an important river port because the only reasonable means of travel at that time was by boat from St. Paul and Fort Snelling. Henderson, therefore, became a very important place as a river port and overland shipping point.”<sup>45</sup> As I have already discussed, the river was not navigable all year long, and so overland transportation was crucial to keep outlying forts and towns well supplied.<sup>46</sup>

The natural surroundings of Henderson contributed to why it was chosen as the starting point for a trail west:<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> “The Sioux at Fort Snelling,” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862. p. 4. col. 1.

<sup>44</sup> In *The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, this date has been footnoted and corrected to be August 1852.

<sup>45</sup> *The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, 2003 edition. Henderson, MN: Sibley County Historical Society, 2003. p. 1. MHS Call number: F612.S56 R44 2003.

<sup>46</sup> While I am not certain if the Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail was originally built by the military, I found an interesting passage that discusses the importance of the military to road building:

During the early decades of American history, the army was the principal instrumentality engaged in road building. In early campaigns, roads were hastily and often crudely constructed by the military, usually along existing Indian trails. The opening of such routes through the wilderness was inescapable when troop movements were of any proportions, or were accompanied by supply trains and artillery. After the land was occupied, settlers soon followed, using the military trails as commercial and migratory wagon routes.

National Highway Users Conference. *Military Roads*. National Press Building, Washington, D. C., 1935. p. 1. MHS Call number: HE356.M6 H57 1989.

<sup>47</sup> The following passage gives an idea of what kind of plant life was present on the trail:

The Fort Ridgely Trail followed along the higher elevations of this divide (between the High Island Creek and Rush River draining basins), where throughout the northern part of Kelso Township the elevated land became more noticeably higher, which in early years was also known as “The Kelso Ridge.” This prairie area had tall grasses and now and then, on knolls, a variety of hazelnut bushes, plum trees, thorn apples and “blackboss bushes,” all edible, with occasional wild grape vining among them. On the edges of swamps that were in this area, “Pussy” willow bushes were growing with an abundance of “cat tails” sticking out above the water line, and also small ponds were adorned likewise.

As more adventurers and settlers came down to seek their fortune or some property they could call their own, it soon became evident that a place must be found that would afford an exit from the deep valley up on the vast expanse of land extending westward into the horizon. Surely many of these migrants were the adventurous type with an urge to explore and seek what was in the great beyond. There were those that wanted to trade with the Indians. It seems there were no usable passages up these steep bluffs that extended along the Minnesota River valley except at Henderson, where there was a dry gully or ravine which no longer served as a runoff point in times of heavy rain, and was of such nature that man could traverse up to the plateau above, even with equipment. Old timers maintained that there were no other passages for miles to the north that could be used to bring a wagon up out of the valley, so that natural passage at Henderson was of great importance for some years, and to this day is still referred to as the "Fort Trail." To the south of here a passage was evident at Traverse Des Sioux, long used by the Indians.

There is no other known route that could have been followed on the "Walker's Landing to Fort Ridgely Trail," except that it wended its way southward along in the valley until it came to the "Fort Hill" at Henderson to proceed westward. So it is quite significant why Henderson became so important as a river port after its founding, from where shipments were made by wagon overland to Fort Ridgely and other outposts in the west. In a report from an early newspaper of that era, it stated that as much as fifty tons of material landed and freighted to the Fort alone per week, let alone that which was bought and used by the settlers.<sup>48</sup>

While it took far less manpower to send supplies up the river, at the times of the year when the river was too low to navigate, the overland trail west out of Henderson was critical. *The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail* further explains the function of the trail in the following passage:

In Sibley County's pioneer days shipping was entirely by way of river navigation and all shipping was done by steamboat on the Minnesota River during the seasons when this was possible. Thousands of tons of freight were brought to Henderson and also other points as many steamboats plied the river. When freight had to be carried over land, the task became more difficult and was accomplished with wagons and carts drawn by horses or even oxen.<sup>49</sup>

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*The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, 2003 edition. Henderson, MN: Sibley County Historical Society, 2003. p. 1. MHS Call number: F612.S56 R44 2003.

<sup>48</sup> *The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, 2003 edition. Henderson, MN: Sibley County Historical Society, 2003. p. 1-2. MHS Call number: F612.S56 R44 2003.

<sup>49</sup> *The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, 2003 edition. Henderson, MN: Sibley County Historical Society, 2003. p. 5-6. MHS Call number: F612.S56 R44 2003.

Note: According to my research, "Ridgely" is the correct spelling of the name of the Fort. In the title of this book, the Sibley County Historical Society spells it "Ridgely." This is the only instance of this spelling I have seen, except for misspellings in various soldier's letters and diary entries.



Orlando McFall, a soldier in Company C of the 5th Minnesota Infantry, in a diary entry from August 1862, describes the Henderson to Fort Ridgley Trail as “the old Government Road.”

Sunday Aug 17 We marched 22 miles due East from the Fort (Fort Ridgley) on the old Government Road. We camped on the night of the 17th in a grove (?) situated at the junction of the Government road and a road running due north ... New Auburn and Glencow (sic) We took an early start on the morning of the 18th and marched 20 miles to New Auburn. About one half mile north of the town we came to a beautiful camping place...<sup>50</sup>

This trail was definitely big enough to accommodate the large number of people and equipment that were on the Dakota Women’s March. The following describes the character of the trail quite vividly:

It must be understood that these trails or roads did not follow along on section or boundary lines, but passed along on the higher or well-drained land in every respect, regardless of how many curves of bends there were in it. When it was absolutely necessary to cross a swampy piece of land, large logs were brought in and laid side by side crosswise to traffic, and then covered with a layer of earth. The government had decreed whenever bridges had to be built to cross streams that they could be constructed with logs not less than 12 inches in diameter, placed into the earth down to solid ground to serve as pillars, over which heavy hewn timbers were to be placed to serve as spans. On top of this a layer of heavy planks were laid to provide passage for traffic. These bridges usually only had a width of 12 feet providing one-way passage.<sup>51</sup>

## **DOWN vs. DOWNRIVER**

I’d like to return for a moment to the language that *The Saint Paul Daily Press* used when reporting that the march went to Fort Snelling via Fort Ridgley and Henderson. Here is that item again:

THE SIOUX AT FORT SNELLING—Lieut. Colonel Marshall is expected down to Fort Snelling to-day, with twelve or fifteen hundred Indians, principally women and children, who are to be quartered there until the intentions of the Government respecting them shall

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<sup>50</sup> McFall, Orlando. “Narrative of the Sioux Massacre in 1862.” MHS Microfilm Collection. Catalog number: M582, roll 2.

<sup>51</sup> *The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, 2003 edition. Henderson, MN: Sibley County Historical Society, 2003. p. 5. MHS Call number: F612.S56 R44 2003.

have been made known. They have marched all the way from Red Wood, via Fort Ridgley and Henderson.<sup>52</sup>

I want to discuss the significance of the fact that the article says that Lieutenant Colonel Marshall was “expected down to Fort Snelling.” I would like to suggest that the use of the word “down” refers to the fact that the march was following the Minnesota river on the last leg of its trip, and therefore heading *downriver*. Since the Minnesota River flows northward at Fort Snelling, today we might say that Marshall was headed “up” to Fort Snelling. Since maps are commonly oriented with north at the top of the page, we have incorporated the spatial descriptor “up” into how we describe northerly movement.

The fact that Fort Snelling was downriver from Henderson, where the march is known to have passed through, might factor into how to interpret a newspaper item from *The Mankato Semi-Weekly Record* that seems to indicate that the march may have gone as far south as Mankato. The news item from *The Mankato Semi-Weekly Record* reads: “Lieut. Col. Marshall passed down a few days ago, with fifteen hundred squaws, children and ‘friendly Indians.’”<sup>53</sup>

How to interpret this item, not credited to an author, is complicated. Either it indicates that the person writing from the Mankato area and was trying to say that the march came as far south as the Mankato area—thus meaning “down” to be south, as in down toward the bottom of a map. However, it is not clear that the author is indicating that the march came to Mankato. It is possible that the item indicates that the march passed *downriver* a few days ago, which could mean, depending on what part of the river the march was following at the time, that they were either traveling in a southerly direction, as they would have been doing as they moved from the Lower Agency to Fort Ridgley, or in a northerly direction, as they would have been doing as

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<sup>52</sup> “The Sioux at Fort Snelling.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862. p. 4. col. 1.

<sup>53</sup> *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 13 November 1862. p. 3, col. 3.

they moved from Henderson to Fort Snelling. Travel in both of these directions could have been referred to using the term “passed downriver,” and possibly, as in this case, just “passed down.”

A passage from the letter of Thomas Montgomery, a soldier that accompanied the prisoner’s march to Mankato, further indicates that use of the term “down” was used to indicate “downriver.” In the following letter to his parents, Montgomery describes life in Camp Lincoln, the military camp established at Mankato:

It is hard to tell what will be done with these Indians yet. They are contracting disease in their close confinement and cannot stand it here in winter. Maybe we may have to march down with them to Fort Snelling yet.<sup>54</sup>

Thomas Montgomery, clearly writing from Mankato, uses the term “down” to refer to the possibility of escorting some of the Dakota at Mankato north to Fort Snelling.

## **HENDERSON**

The women’s march is widely reported to have gone through Henderson where it suffered an attack from white settlers. Gabriel Renville was a “mixed-blood” who worked to protect white settlers during the uprising. He later became Chief of the Sisseton and Wahpeton Sioux of lake Traverse<sup>55</sup>. In his memoir, he recalls the attack that was inflicted upon the women’s march at Henderson:

The friendly Indians and their families, and the families of the prisoners, on their way to Fort Snelling, passed through Henderson, at which place the whites were very much angered and threw stones at the Indians, hitting some of them, and pulled the shawls and blankets off the women, and abused them much. But they finally got through the town without any one being killed, and formed a camp beyond the town, in an open prairie.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Thomas Montgomery to his parents, dated November 20, 1862. MHS Microfilm Collection. Catalog number: M235.

<sup>55</sup> Brown, Samuel. “Biographical Sketch of Chief Gabriel Renville.” MHS Manuscripts Collection (*Pamphlets relating to Dakota Indians in Minnesota*). MHS Manuscripts Collection. Catalog number: E99.D1.

<sup>56</sup> Renville, Gabriel. “A Sioux Narrative of the Outbreak in 1862, and of Sibley’s Expedition in 1863.” *Minnesota Historical Society Collections*. Minnesota Historical Society: St. Paul, MN, 10:2. p. 234. MHS Reading Room. Call Number: F602 .M61 v.10:2.

In a narrative that became part of the book *In Captivity*, Samuel Brown gives his rendition of the attack at Henderson, and on the death of a Dakota infant at the hands of a settler. According to Samuel Brown, the march passed through Henderson on November 11th.<sup>57</sup>

#### AN ANGERED MOB

I went along with Col. Marshall's detachment—the train measuring about four miles in length. At Henderson, which we reached on the 11th, we found the streets crowded with an angry and excited populace, cursing, shouting and crying. Men, women and children armed with guns, knives, clubs and stones, rushed upon the Indians, as the train was passing by, and before the soldiers could interfere and stop them, succeeded in pulling many of the old men and women and even children from the wagons by the hair of the head, and beating them, and otherwise inflicting injury upon the helpless and miserable creatures.

#### AS BAD AS SAVAGES

I saw an enraged white woman rush up to one of the wagons and snatch a nursing babe from its mother's breast and dash it violently upon the ground. The soldiers' instantly seized her and led or rather dragged to woman away and restored the papoose to its mother—limp and almost dead. Although the child was not killed outright, it died a few hours after. The body was quietly laid away in the crotch of a tree a few miles below Henderson and not far from Faxon.

#### THE LAST OF A TRIBAL CUSTOM

I witnessed the ceremony, which was, perhaps the last of the kind within the limits of Minnesota; that is, the last Sioux Indian "buried" according to one of the oldest and most cherished customs of the tribe.

#### MORALIZING UPON HUMAN DEPRAVITY

And here my thoughts reverted to the case of the Indian brave at the dance who boasted in "ghoulish glee" that he had roasted a babe in the oven, and I contrasted it with the case before me. An uncivilized heathen in the one case and a *civilized christian* white woman in the other!<sup>58</sup>

#### A BRAVE MAN AND A BRAVE ACT

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<sup>57</sup> Brown states that the march passed through Henderson on November 11, 1862. However, it should be noted that he lists the day of departure from the Lower Agency as November 9, 1862. Brown marks the day the march arrived at Fort Snelling as November 14, 1862.

It is unclear at what time Brown wrote down his recollections in relation to when the events in question took place. The introduction to Brown's work *In Captivity*, states, "the writer has a remarkable memory, which, with the aid of the diary kept at the time, has enabled him to recall some intensely interesting incidents of captivity, and the dangers attending their retention in the hostile country."

<sup>58</sup> Brown's comments here criticize a white woman that attacked an Indian woman and child. In my research, I rarely came across a negative comment about the behavior of a white settler, by another white person. This is a notable exception.

There was another incident that took place at Henderson which is worth mentioning. I refer to a brave and noble act by one of the bravest and noblest of men—Lieut. Col. Marshall, afterwards governor of Minnesota.

While the train was passing through the town one of the citizens with blood in his eyes and halfcrazed with drink rushed up with a gun leveled at Charles Crawford, one of the friendlies, and was about to fire, when “the bold charger of the plains.” Lieut Col. Marshall, who happened along on horseback, rushed between them and struck down the gun with his saber and got Crawford out of the way, thus saving a life at the risk of his own.<sup>59</sup>

*The Saint Paul Daily Press* mentioned the attack in a news item I have quoted earlier in my report:

THE SIOUX AT FORT SNELLING—Lieut. Colonel Marshall is expected down to Fort Snelling to-day, with twelve or fifteen hundred Indians, principally women and children, who are to be quartered there until the intentions of the Government respecting them shall have been made known. They have marched all the way from Red Wood, via Fort Ridgley and Henderson. At Henderson, we understand, quite a good deal of ill feeling was manifested against a half-breed who had been tried by the Commission and cleared—the populace deeming him as guilty as those condemned, were with difficulty restrained from executing summary vengeance.<sup>60</sup>

Henderson is mentioned as part of the route of the women’s march, and as one of the locations of where the march camped, in an item unrelated to the attack at Henderson. First Lieutenant John F. Bishop, of Company B of the Fifth Minnesota Infantry, one of the companies reported to have accompanied the march, makes the following report:

A young Indian whom I had often befriended and who was captured by General Sibley, told me one night while in camp near Henderson while en route to Fort Snelling, under charge of General Marshall, that he was in the fight at the ferry, and that Little Crow had about 325 or 350 armed warriors, about 50 warriors from the upper band and about 20 or 25 Winnebagoes besides some boys with bows and arrows, whom they did not consider fighters.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Brown, Samuel. *In Captivity: The Experience, Privations, and Dangers of Samuel J. Brown and Others While Prisoners of the Hostile Sioux During the Massacre and War of 1862*. Washington D.C.: G.P.O., 1900 [?]. p. 11. MHS Call number: E83.86. B86 1897.

<sup>60</sup> “The Sioux at Fort Snelling.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862. p. 4. col. 1.

<sup>61</sup> From the report of First Lieutenant John F. Bishop, Co. B, Fifth Minnesota Infantry Sheldon, Iowa, Sept. 5, 1887. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 170. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005.

The combination of these four sources, each reporting the march's passage through Henderson makes this one of the most well documented portions of the march.

## CONNECTING THE TOWNS

In order to speculate about a likely route between the Lower Agency and Fort Snelling, it can be helpful to look at the movements of other military parties in the same area at the same time. In this vein, I discovered a diary written by a soldier named Austin Carrell.<sup>62</sup> Carrell was a member of Company C of the 10th Minnesota Infantry. In October 1862, his company was ordered to march from Fort Snelling to Camp Sibley at the Lower Agency, essentially the opposite starting point and destination of the women's march. The entries I have transcribed here illustrate the route this march took and the amount of time the journey took.

Fort Snelling Oct. 8th

We got orders to march to day (sic) we are to be mounted. We are to go and report to Sibley.

...

Fort Snelling Oct. 12

This is the holy Sabbath. I have been riding (?) all day the boys are anxious to start.

Camp about 9 from the Fort. Oct 13th we are camped on a little stream in a grove it is a nice place we left the fort about 2 o'clock.<sup>63</sup>

Oct. 14th 1862

We are camped on a little stream called Jordan it is a nice little stream we came through some very poor country to-day it is a nice little stream . . . we came through Shockapee (sic) to day it is a nice little town

Oct. 15th 1862

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<sup>62</sup> In the regiment listings found in volume one of *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, Carrell's name is spelled "Carroll."

<sup>63</sup> This entry is structured differently from the others. However, it is clear from the quality of the ink in the original diary that the phrase "Camp about 9 from the Fort" was written at the same time as "Oct 13th we are camped on a little stream in a grove..." I am confident that these items were written at the same time and in the same entry.

We are camped at Henderson we came through 2 or 3 towns the first was St Lawrence next bellplain Flaxan Ferry and Henderson.

October 16th

For about 10 or 15 miles from our camped it was settled after that they was no horses we are camped tonight on a little lake they was a man lived here but he left and left all his sloth (?) furniture in the house.

Fort Ridgeley (sic) Oct 17th

We got to this place about 2 oclock we seen no horses on the road we seen where they was one but the Indians had \_\_\_\_\_ it saw a steam wagon.

Fort Ridgeley (sic) Oct 18th

We have been here to the fort we have been getting our horses shod leave here tomorrow I saw the bones of the dead Indian he was buried some of the boys dug him up some of the boys feet pretty sore I guess some of them will feel sorer . . .

Oct 19th

we are here to the lower agency the Indians have burned everything here here is where they commenced (?)

Here is a summary of the movements of this group, according to Austin Carrell:

October 13, 1862—Left Fort Snelling *on horseback*

October 15—Arrived and camped at Henderson

October 17—Arrived at Fort Ridgley at about 2pm

October 18—Stayed at Fort Ridgley, getting horses shod

October 19—Left Fort Ridgley and arrived at the Lower Agency

The timing of this trip invites speculation about the possibility of the women's march having taken the same route. This group made the trip between Fort Snelling and the Lower Agency over seven days, having spent an entire day at Fort Ridgley getting their horses shod. Because they were on horseback, certainly this group was able to travel much faster than the women's march would have been able to. So Carrell's group made the same trip over about 6 days—the fact that their trip was one day shorter time may account for the fact that they were able to move faster.

## AN ORAL EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

A Dakota oral account suggests another alternative for the route. The eyewitness report of Maza Okiye Win (Isabel Roberts) relates another version of the route and offers insight into the experience of those that were being marched to Fort Snelling. This account can be found on the website for the Dakota Commemorative March, and in Angela Cavender Wilson's work *Grandmother to Granddaughter: Generations of Oral Tradition in a Dakota Family*. The account was "told to and carried by Elsie Cavender and passed to Angela Cavender Wilson by Elsie Cavender in 1990."<sup>64</sup> What follows here is the bulk of this account by Elsie Cavender, from a recording made of her by her granddaughter, Angela Cavender Wilson.<sup>65</sup>

Right after the 1862 Conflict, most of the Sioux people were driven out of Minnesota. A lot of our people left to other states. This must have been heartbreaking for them, as this valley had always been their home.

My grandmother, Isabel Roberts (Maza Okiye Win is her Indian name), and her family were taken as captives down to Fort Snelling. On the way most of them [the people] walked, but some of the older ones and the children rode in a cart. In Indian the cart was called canpahmihma kawitkotkoka. That means crazy cart in Indian. The reason they called the cart that is because it had one big wheel that didn't have any spokes. It was just one big round board. When they went they didn't grease it just right so it squeaked. You could just hear that noise about a mile away. The poor men, women, old people, and children who had to listen to it got sick from it. They would get headaches real bad. It carried the old people and the children so they wouldn't have to walk. Most of the people just walked. Some of them if they were lucky rode horses.

They passed through a lot of towns and they went through some where the people were real hostile to them. They would throw rocks, cans, sticks, and everything they could

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<sup>64</sup> "Eye Witness Report from Maza Okiye Win (Isabel Roberts) in 1862 as told to and carried by Elsie Cavender. Passed to Angela Cavender Wilson by Elsie Cavender in 1990." *Dakota Commemorative March Website*; accessed 7 August 2006. Available from <http://dakota-march.50megs.com/oneredreport1862.html>.

<sup>65</sup> In the course of my research I was given a photocopy of a printed version of the oral account attributed to the same source as the account that is on the Dakota Commemorative March website, from Elsie Cavender. The only citation on this document indicates that it was originally printed by an unknown newspaper from Lac Qui Parle county. This version of Elsie Cavender's oral account is similar to the account that I have quoted above from the Dakota Commemorative March website, although there are a few notable differences. Namely, rather than state that the attack on her grandmother happened near New Ulm, it is suggested that the attack happened near Morton or New Ulm. Morton as a town did not exist in 1862, but its location today is roughly where the Lower Agency was. If the attack took place where the modern day Morton is, the march may not have gone to New Ulm, as the other oral account contends. I did not find the original source of this account from the unknown newspaper. I have included the entirety of both versions of the oral accounts in the appendix to this report.



think of: potatoes, even rotten tomatoes and eggs. They were throwing these things at them, but the Indians still had to walk through the main streets. So they had to take all that. Then when they would pass through the town they would be all right. A lot of those towns I don't know the names of in English. They used to say them in Indian. The two towns that were the worst they had to go through were Henderson and New Ulm, Minnesota. I didn't know the name in English so I said, "Grandfather, do you know how they call them in English?"

"No, I just know their Indian names," he said.

So then I had to go to Mr. Fred Pearsall. In Indian his name was Wanbdi Ska (White Eagle). He was a white man, but he knew a lot of things about the conflict. He talked Indian just like we do. He knew all those things that happened and he knew just what words to use to describe the times. So I was able to get the names of those towns. They were the worst ones they had to go through.

When they came through New Ulm they threw cans, potatoes, and sticks. They went on through the town anyway. The old people were in the cart. They were coming to the end of the town and they thought they were out of trouble. Then there was a big building at the end of the street. The windows were open. Someone threw hot, scalding water on them. The children were all burned and the old people too. As soon as they started to rub their arms the skin just peeled off. Their faces were like that, too. The children were all crying, even the old ladies started to cry, too. It was so hard it really hurt them but they went on.

They would camp some place at night. They would feed them, giving them meat, potatoes, or bread. But they brought the bread in on big lumber wagons with no wrapping on them. They would just throw it on the ground. They would have them sleep in either cabins or tents. When they saw the wagons coming they would come out of there. They had to eat food like that. So, they would just brush off the dust and eat it that way. The meat was the same way. They had to wash it and eat it. A lot of them got sick. They would get dysentery and diarrhea and some had cases of whooping cough and small pox. This went on for several days. A lot of them were complaining that they drank the water and got sick. It was just like a nightmare going on this trip.

It was on this trip that my maternal grandmother's grandmother was killed by white soldiers. My grandmother, Maza Okiye Win, was ten years old at the time and she remembers everything that happened on this journey. The killing took place when they came to a bridge that had no guard rails. The horses or stock were getting restless and were very thirsty. So, when they saw water they wanted to get down to the water right away, and they couldn't hold them still. So, the women and children all got out, including my grandmother, her mother, and her grandmother.

When all this commotion started the soldiers came running to the scene and demanded to know what was wrong. But most of them [the Dakota] couldn't speak English and so couldn't talk. This irritated them and right away they wanted to get rough and tried to

push my grandmother's mother and her grandmother off the bridge, but they only succeeded in pushing the older one off and she fell in the water. Her daughter ran down and got her out and she was all wet, so she took her shawl off and put it around her. After this they both got back up on the bridge with the help of the others who were waiting there, including the small daughter, Maza Okiye Win.

She was going to put her mother in the wagon, but it was gone. They stood there not knowing what to do. She wanted to put her mother someplace where she could be warm, but before they could get away, the soldier came again and stabbed her mother with a saber. She screamed and hollered in pain, so she [her daughter] stooped down to help her. But her mother said, "Please daughter, go. Don't mind me. Take your daughter and go before they do the same thing to you. I'm done for anyway. If they kill you the children will have no one." Though she was in pain and dying she was still concerned about her daughter and little granddaughter who was standing there and witnessed all this. The daughter left her mother there at the mercy of the soldiers, as she knew she had a responsibility as a mother to take care of her small daughter.

Up to today we don't even know where my grandmother's body is. If only they had given the body back to us we could have given her a decent funeral," Grandma said. So, at night, Grandma's mother had gone back to the bridge where her mother had fallen. She went there but there was no body. There was blood all over the bridge but the body was gone. She went down to the bank. She walked up and down the bank. She even waded across to see if she could see anything on the other side, but no body, nothing. So she came back up. She went on from there not knowing what happened to her or what they did with the body.<sup>66</sup>

## MY OPINION ABOUT THE ROUTE

In my opinion, the women's march left the Lower Agency, crossed over the Minnesota River immediately, at the Lower Agency. They then followed the Minnesota River on the northerly side, until they reached Fort Ridgley. The march then followed the trail that connects Fort Ridgley and Henderson and then rejoined the Minnesota River, and followed it up to Fort Snelling.

I think that the contradictions in departure and arrival dates that I discussed earlier are incidental errors in date keeping by several sources. The most likely dates for the march to have

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<sup>66</sup> "Eye Witness Report from Maza Okiye Win (Isabel Roberts) in 1862 as told to and carried by Elsie Cavender. Passed to Angela Cavender Wilson by Elsie Cavender in 1990." *Dakota Commemorative March Website*; accessed 7 August 2006. Available from <http://dakota-march.50megs.com/oneredreport1862.html>.

been conducted were November 7, 1862 through November 13, 1862. However, seeing as how the train of marchers was reported to be up to four miles long, it is possible that the later parts of the train of marchers arrived on the following day, November 14, 1862.

I'd like to address the oral account that claims the march passed through New Ulm. Because the women's march and the prisoner's march left the Lower Agency on consecutive days, had the women's march passed through New Ulm, they would have done so the day before the prisoner's march did. It is well recorded that the prisoner's march was attacked as they passed near New Ulm. The number of people that made up the prisoner's march was considerably smaller than the women's march—about four hundred prisoners, a small number of women and unconvicted Dakota that were along to cook for and tend to the prisoners, and the military escort. The women's march consisted of about 1,800 women, children, and unconvicted men, and their military escort. The settlers in the area at the time were angered to the point of wanting to attack anyone they suspected was involved in the uprising that killed so many of their fellow settlers. If a march as large as the women's march passed through New Ulm, there would have been a clash between the settlers and the Dakota Women's March, just as there was between the settlers and the prisoner's march. The people of New Ulm would not have hesitated to attack women, children, and the unconvicted men had they had gotten the chance. None of the numerous sources that recount the attack on the prisoner's march at New Ulm, mention that another very large group passed through on the previous day and were attacked as well. Therefore, I do not believe that the women's march went through New Ulm.

In my opinion, the women's march crossed the Minnesota River immediately upon leaving the Lower Agency, at the Lower Agency. I believe the group forded the river. There had been a ferry at the Lower Agency, but the idea that this large a group, including carts, and

equipment, would have taken the ferry is impractical. I believe that a ferry of the time would have probably held 20 or 30 people at a time. It would have taken a prohibitive amount of time for the group to have crossed by ferry. Rather, I believe that the most likely scenario was that the river at that time of year time was sufficiently low for the group to cross on foot, and to have driven the carts through the river. The Minnesota River was known to have great fluctuations in its water level, becoming at times becoming impossible to navigate by boat, as I discussed earlier in my section about the Minnesota River.

One item that could contradict my conclusions is the article from the *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record* that reads: “Lieut. Col. Marshall passed down a few days ago, with fifteen hundred squaws, children and ‘friendly Indians.’”<sup>67</sup> From what I have seen about how the term “down” has been used in the context of the research I have done, I believe that this news item does not mean that the march went as far south as Mankato or the Mankato area. I believe it refers to the fact that the march was headed downriver, and therefore did not necessarily pass through, or near Mankato. This agrees with the several sources that use the same term “down” to refer to going in a northerly direction (from Mankato to Fort Snelling, for example).

I approached this research project as a process of gathering information, and I approached writing this report as the act of presenting all of the information I have found in one place. I found a substantial amount of material that those interested in the march may be interested in reading. I have also collected a substantial amount of information from original documents related to the events surrounding the march, but not having a direct bearing on the project of discovering the route. Many of these materials have been transcribed in their entirety and can be found in the appendix to this report. I have also included, where possible, photocopies of original

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<sup>67</sup> *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. p. 3, col. 3.

documents and microfilmed newspapers, all of which I have transcribed here for ease in reading.

I urge those interested to examine this material and to draw their own conclusions.

## NOVEMBER 1862

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

### POTENTIAL ITINERARY OF THE DAKOTA WOMEN'S MARCH

Fri. Nov. 7

Left Lower Agency, a.m.  
Crossed the Minnesota River at Lower Agency.  
Marched to Fort Ridgley. Arrived in the p.m.  
Camped at Fort Ridgley.

Sat. Nov. 8

Left Fort Ridgley, a.m. (per Gere, although he says Sat. Nov. *9th*)  
Marched on the Henderson to Fort Ridgley trail.  
Camped on prairie in between Fort Ridgley and Henderson, p.m.

Sun. Nov. 9

Marched on the Henderson to Fort Ridgley trail.  
Camped on prairie in between Fort Ridgley and Henderson, p.m.

Mon. Nov. 10

Marched on the Henderson to Fort Ridgley trail.  
Passed through and was attacked at Henderson  
Camped outside Henderson, p.m.

Tues. Nov. 11

Left Henderson area  
Marched up Minnesota River  
Camped in between Henderson and Fort Snelling, p.m.

Wed. Nov. 12

Marched up Minnesota River  
Passed Shakopee (per Carrell's march's timing)  
Camped in between Shakopee and Fort Snelling, p.m.

Thurs. Nov. 13

Arrived at Fort Snelling, p.m.

## **NOTE ABOUT THE TRYGG MAP**

The map included with this report was originally created by William Trygg (informally called the Trygg Maps) in the mid 1960s. Published in 1964, this map is a cartographic composite map of the original United States Land Surveyors plats and field notes taken in the mid 1800s, from approximately 1848 to 1907. The Trygg Maps are the best cartographic representation of what Minnesota looked like in 1862.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Trygg, J. William. Composite map of United States Land Surveyors' original plats and field notes: Minnesota series. Ely, MN: J. Wm. Trygg, c1964-c1969.

## Annotated Bibliography

The material I have cited and annotated here has been excerpted in the appendix and may have been quoted in the report. These brief annotations are intended to inform the reader of the main value I saw in these sources for the purpose of determining the route of the march, or what purpose they serve in commenting on related events of the time.

To facilitate locating these excerpts in the appendix, I have noted at the end of the annotation which section of the appendix transcribed material from this source can be found in (Books<sup>69</sup>, Diaries, Letters, Newspapers). The materials in the appendix are all sorted chronologically by date except for the Books section which is alphabetized by author (where possible) or title.

\*An asterisk after the citation indicates that a photocopy of this material is contained in the material accompanying the report.

**“Army Brutality Marked Death March To Fort Snelling After Indian Uprising In 1862.”  
Unknown Newspaper from Lac Qui Parle County. \***

This is a newspaper article that has no real citation. It is said to have appeared in an “unknown newspaper from Lac Qui Parle County.” Credited to Elsie Cavender, it details the murder of her great-great-grandmother at the hands of a soldier during the women’s march. (*Newspapers*)

**“Attack on the Condemned Indians at New Ulm.” *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. 13 November 1862. p, 4, col. 1. \***

This article is a brief description of the attack on the prisoner’s march at New Ulm. (*Newspapers*)

**Brown, Samuel. *In Captivity: The Experience, Privations, and Dangers of Samuel J. Brown and Others While Prisoners of the Hostile Sioux During the Massacre and War of 1862*. Washington D.C.: G.P.O., 1900. MHS Call number: E83.86. B86 1897. \***

Brown accompanied the women’s march. This source contains details about the departure date and an account of the attack at Henderson. (*Books*)

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<sup>69</sup> While I am abbreviating this section simply as “Books,” it also contains material from magazine and journal articles, and websites.



**Bryant, Charles S., and Abel B. Murch. *A History of the Great Massacre by the Sioux Indians in Minnesota: Including the Personal Narratives of Many Who Escaped*. Cincinnati, OH: Rickey and Carroll Publishers, 1864. MHS Call number: E83.86 .B91 1864.**

This history, published just two years after the march, contains a very brief mention of the march, but no details about the route. (*Books*)

**Carrell, Austin. October 8, 1862-November 9, 1862. *Samuel D. Carrell and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/.C314. \***

Austin Carrell was part of a company that made the reverse trip of the women's march—from Ft. Snelling to the Lower Agency—in October 1862. His entries for these days detail how far his group went each day and where they camped. The details of Carrell's trip, albeit the reverse direction, invite speculation about possible distances traveled and campsites used by the women's march. Carrell accompanied the prisoner's march to Mankato and mentions the New Ulm attack. (*Diaries*)

**“The Condemned Indians.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862. pg. 4, col. 1. \***

This is a report on the progress of Sibley's march, its arrival at South Bend, and the attack that was made on the march at New Ulm. (*Newspapers*)

**Cooke, Chauncey H. “A Badger Boy in Blue: The Letters of Chauncey H. Cooke.” *Wisconsin Magazine of History*. Madison 1920-21. v. 4, no. 1-4. MHS call number: F576 .W8 v.4.**

A book of a soldier's letters home. Contains an eloquent letter about Cooke's observations about the encampment at Ft. Snelling after the march. (*Books*)

***Dakota Commemorative March Website*. “Eye Witness Report from Maza Okiye Win (Isabel Roberts) in 1862 as told to and carried by Elsie Cavender. Passed to Angela Cavender Wilson by Elsie Cavender in 1990.” Accessed 7 August 2006, <http://dakota-march.50megs.com/onedreport1862.html>.**

A Dakota eye witness account of the march. (*Books*)

**Daniels, Jared Waldo. *Jared Daniels Reminiscences*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P2247. \***

This item has a brief mention of the women's march and the number of marchers, and of the prisoner's march. (*Books*)

**Danielson, John. November 7, 1862-November 10, 1862. *History of Company G of 7th Minnesota Volunteers, War of the Rebellion*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1993.**

Danielson was on the prisoner's march to Mankato. He mentions a few details about when they departed the Lower Agency, where the march camped, and how far the march traveled. (*Diaries*)

**Densmore, Benjamin to unknown recipient. Ft. Snelling, MN. November 17, 1862. *Benjamin Densmore and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/.D413.**

This letter was of interest to me as it mentions the fact that boats, at some point, stop running "below Lake Pepin." (*Letters*)

**Densmore to brother (first name of author is not clear). Red Wing, MN. November 27, 1862, written from Red Wing. *Benjamin Densmore and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/.D413.**

The excerpt of letter includes information about Dakota deaths that were occurring in the encampment at Ft. Snelling. (*Letters*)

**"From the Indian Region." *Faribault Central Republican*. 19 November 1862. p. 2, col. 6. \***

This is a report on the attack on the prisoner's march at New Ulm. (*Newspapers*)

**"Gen. Sibley." *Mankato Semi Weekly Record*. November 8, 1862. p. 2. col. 1. \***

This article praises General Sibley for his conduct and performance in the war, and mentions that the prisoner's march is on its way to Mankato. (*Newspapers*)

**Gere, Thomas. November 16, 1862. Fort Snelling, MN. *William B. and Thomas P. Gere Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P2434.**

In this entry, Gere, a soldier that was on the women's march, writes of having passed through Ft. Ridgely on the trip. He also comments on the presence of the Indian women and children at Ft. Snelling, of witnessing the prisoners in chains, and of when the women's march left Ft. Ridgely and arrived at Ft. Snelling. (*Diaries*)

**Hamlin, Jacob L. to his parents. Mankato, MN. November 12, 1862. *Hamlin Family Papers*. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: P1577. \***

Hamlin, a soldier that accompanied the march to Mankato, wrote this letter to his parents. In it he muses on what will become of the families of the condemned Dakota and writes of the attack at New Ulm. (*Letters*)

**Hamlin, Jacob L. to "friends." Mankato, Minnesota. December 27, 1862. *Hamlin Family Papers*. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: P1577. \***

Hamlin, a soldier that was at Mankato during the hanging of the Dakota prisoners, here describes the execution, the scene in Mankato, and the behavior of a few of the Indians on their way to the gallows. (*Letters*)

**Heard, Isaac V. D. *History of the Sioux War and Massacres of 1862 and 1863*. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1864. MHS Call Number: E83.86.H43 1864. \***

Contains information about dates of departure of both the women's and prisoner's marches, and an account of the attack on the prisoner's march at New Ulm. (*Books*)

***The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, 2003 edition. Henderson, MN: Sibley County Historical Society, 2003. MHS Call number: F612.S56 R44 2003.**

A history of the trail connecting Fort Ridgely and Henderson. (*Books*)

**Hill, Alfred James. *History of Company E, of the Sixth Minnesota Regiment of Volunteer Infantry*. St. Paul: T. H. Lewis, 1899. MHS Call number: E515.5 6th .H. \***

The title is self explanatory. Part two titled "Services in Minnesota Against the Sioux Indians—1862-83" was particularly relevant. (*Books*)

**“The Indian Expedition.” *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*. 14 November 1862, pg. 2, col. 3. \***

This is a letter written to the Editor of the *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*. Written from the Red Wood Agency (a.k.a. the Lower Agency), it outlines life in Camp Sibley, stories of finding victims of the war in the surrounding areas, and of the Indian camp there. (*Newspapers*)

**“The Indian Expedition.” *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*. 21 November 1862. pg. 3, col. 4. \***

This article mentions the women’s march, their numbers, the date of their departure from Ft. Snelling, and Lt. Col. Marshall as the commanding officer. This letter was written on November 7, 1862 and published on November 21, 1862. (*Newspapers*)

**“The Indians at the Fort.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 14 November 1862. pg. 4, col. 1. \***

This is an article announcing the arrival of the women’s march at Ft. Snelling and names some of the individual Dakota that were on the march. (*Newspapers*)

**“The Indian Prisoners.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. pg. 2, col. 2. \***

This article expresses frustration at the government because of rumors that there might be an attempt to arrange a “permanent peace” with the Dakota. It characterizes the settlers as infuriated and likely to rise up should the government not “drive every Indian, agent and trader from our borders.” (*Newspapers*)

**“The Indian War—Removal of Troops.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 1 November 1862. p. 2. \***

This article reads like a modern day editorial or opinion piece. It urges the state government not to remove troops from the area affected by the Dakota War. (*Newspapers*)

**Jackson, Richard Mott to unknown recipient. October 10, 1903. “Rescue of White Girl Captives from Indians, An incident of the Minnesota Massacre in 1862.” *John S. Marsh Military Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1369.**

Jackson, a soldier that was at Mankato for the hanging of the condemned Dakota prisoners, here describes his disappointment that more Dakota weren’t convicted, the building of the scaffolding for the hanging, and the hanging itself. (*Letters*)

**Jones, Evan. *The Minnesota: Forgotten River*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962. MHS Call Number: F614.M46 J6.**

Relates the history of the Minnesota River. I was particularly interested in this book for what it had to say about the fluctuating water levels of the river, and what times of year the river was not navigable. It contains a long letter by Henry D. Thoreau about his experience going up the Minnesota on a steamboat in June 1861. (*Books*)

**“Local Affairs.” *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*. 21 November 1862. pg. 8, col 1. \***

A note about a squaw that was “accidentally shot” at Fort Snelling. (*Newspapers*)

**“Making Preparations.” *St. Peter Tribune*. 15 November 1862. pg. 2, col. 2. \***

This is a brief note about the preparations the people of Mankato were making for the execution of the Dakota prisoners. (*Newspapers*)

***Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. p. 3, col. 3. \***

A single line, stating that “Lieut. Col. Marshall passed down a few days ago, with fifteen hundred squaws, children, and ‘friendly Indians.’” (*Newspapers*)

**McFall, Orlando. August 17, 1862. *Narrative of the Sioux Indian Massacre in 1862*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M582, frame 381.**

This entry contains a brief mention of what it seems was the Fort Ridgley to Henderson trail. (*Diaries*)

**“Memorial.” *St. Peter Tribune*. 8 December, 1862. p. 1 col. 3. \***

This is an open letter to President Lincoln, which expresses outrage that the Dakota might be able to “reoccupy their reservations and re-possess their former privileges.” Its author urges the prompt removal of the Indians from the state. The language used here is extremely inflammatory. (*Newspapers*)

**“Military.” *The Saint Paul Pioneer Press*. 14 November 1862. pg. 1, col. 4. \***

A brief mention of Lt. Col. Marshall’s arrival at Fort Snelling and the number of Dakota that were on the women’s march. (*Newspapers*)

***Military Roads: A Brief History of the Construction of Highways by the Military Establishment and a Gazetteer of the Military Roads in Continental United States. National Highway Users Conference: Washington, D. C., 1935. MHS Call number: HE355 .N19 1935.***

Contains information about the construction of roads by the military. I used this source to try to discover the likely roads that the military would use in conducting the women's march. (*Books*)

***Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 1. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005.***

Among other things, this book contains the roster lists of regiments and companies involved in the conflict. (*Books*)

***Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005.***

This volume contains the official reports and correspondence of the Dakota War of 1862, and more. (*Books*)

***Minnesota History Quarterly. 11:131. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society, 1930.***

This article contains information about steamboating on the Minnesota River when the river had low water levels. (*Books*)

***The Minnesota Pioneer. 12 August 1852. p. 2, col. 3. \****

This article makes reference to the dry season for the river and that the river level drops at that time. It also reports that a steamboat coming downriver was charging higher rates as it was making one of the last trips down the river that season. (*Newspapers*)

***Montgomery, Thomas to his parents and brothers. Mankato, MN. November 20, 1862. Thomas Montgomery Letters. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M235.***

In this letter, Montgomery, a soldier who was with the Indians in Mankato, comments on the living conditions of the prisoners, and mentions that he may have to march with some of them "down" to Ft. Snelling at some point. (*Letters*)

**Montgomery, Thomas to his parents. Mankato, MN. December 7, 1862. *Thomas Montgomery Letters*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M235.**

Montgomery was a soldier that was quartered at Mankato. In this letter, he narrates the events of the night a group of settlers advanced on the camp with the intention of killing the imprisoned Dakota. (*Letters*)

**Montgomery, Thomas to his parents. Mankato, MN. December 19, 1862. *Thomas Montgomery Letters*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M235.**

In this letter, Montgomery, stationed at Mankato, tells of a woman who came to the prison to visit the prisoners. He said he thought she was the mother of one prisoner and the sister of others. He comments on the way she was treated by the Indians and the squaws that were there tending to the prisoners. He describes the prison and the daily life in the camp. He invites his parents up to see the execution of the prisoners. (*Letters*)

**“News from Sibley’s Camp.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 8 November 1862. pg. 1, col. 3. \***

This newspaper article reports the number of Dakota the military commission tried and convicted. It also mentions that Sibley would be going to Mankato with the prisoners, and that Marshall would be going to Ft. Snelling with the women, children, and unconvicted men. (*Newspapers*)

**Pickett, Eli K. to his wife. Mankato, MN. December 4 (9?), 1862. *Eli K. Pickett Correspondence*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1481. \***

This letter, written by a soldier that was at Mankato in early December 1862, narrates a violent event that took place among soldiers in the camp, and the night settlers advanced toward the camp with the intention of killing the imprisoned Dakota. (*Letters*)

**Pickett, Eli K. to his wife. Mankato, MN. December 25, 1862. *Eli K. Pickett Correspondence*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1481. \***

In this letter, Pickett, a soldier at Mankato at the time of the execution of the Dakota prisoners describes the gallows and the plan for the hanging that will take place the following day. (*Letters*)

**Pickett, Eli K. to his wife. Mankato, MN. December 26, 1862. *Eli K. Pickett Correspondence*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1481. \***

Here, Pickett describes in intense detail the hanging of the condemned prisoners. He comments on the behavior of the Dakota as they walked to the gallows, and the hanging itself. (*Letters*)

**Pope to Halleck. St. Paul, MN. October 13, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 274. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

This letter from Pope to Major General Halleck mentions the fact that the river “closes about November 25.” (*Letters*)

**Pope to Halleck. St. Paul, MN. October 14, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 275. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

A brief letter from Pope to Halleck regarding an impending battle. (*Letters*)

**Pope to Halleck. St. Paul, MN. October 27, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

The part of this letter from Pope to Halleck that was of interest to me was the statement that the river is low and should “close by November 15.” (*Letters*)

**Pope to President Abraham Lincoln. St. Paul, MN. November 12, 1862. *Robert Todd Lincoln Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/-L738. \***

This is a letter from Pope to Lincoln in which Pope briefs the President on the atmosphere in Minnesota and his opinion on the captured Dakota. He encourages Lincoln to punish the Dakota harshly and to do so quickly as the settlers are growing impatient. He suggests that to not punish the Dakota would make the government appear to be afraid of them. (*Letters*)

**Pope to President Abraham Lincoln, dated November 24, 1862. *Robert Todd Lincoln papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/-L738.**

In this letter to President Lincoln, Pope warns him that settlers are amassing themselves with the intention of killing the captured Dakota. He urges the President to make a



decision soon as to the fate of the Dakota in order to avoid trouble with angry settlers.  
(*Letters*)

**Pope to Ramsey. St. Paul, MN. November 6, 1862. "Letter of Gen. Pope to Gov. Ramsey." *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*. 14 November 1862. pg, 3, col. 3. \***

This letter from Pope to Governor Ramsey outlines Pope's plan to physically remove all Dakota from the State of Minnesota. (*Letters*)

**Pope to Sibley. St. Paul, MN. October 7, 1862. *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166, frame 649. \***

This letter contains Pope's instructions to Sibley to send the women, children, and unconvicted men to Ft. Snelling. (*Letters*)

**Pope to Sibley. St. Paul, MN. October 10, 1862. *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166, frame 650. \***

This is a letter from Pope to Sibley concerning the military commission at the Lower Agency, movement of troops, and instructions regarding treatment of the Dakota.  
(*Letters*)

**Pope to Sibley. St. Paul, MN. October 10, 1862. *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166, frame 652. \***

Letter from Pope to Sibley, in which Pope states that the guilty Dakota should be hung. Also, he instructs Sibley to destroy everything that they find in the countryside that could aid the Dakota in their survival, and to tell all annuity Indians that they are not permitted to leave their reservations, and should they do so, they could be shot. (*Letters*)

**Pope to Sibley. St. Paul, MN. October 17, 1862. *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166, frame 653. \***

A letter from Pope to Sibley, instructing him to move the trials to Mankato, where the executions will occur. Pope mentions that President Lincoln has directed that "no executions be made without his sanction." (*Letters*)

**Potter, Theodore. "Captain Potter's Recollections of Minnesota Experiences." *Minnesota History Bulletin*, vol. 1. St. Paul, MN. Minnesota Historical Society.**

Contains a detailed description of the hanging and burial of the condemned Indians at Mankato on December 26, 1862. (*Books*)

**"Prisoner's Coming." *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 1 November 1862. p. 1. \***

This article announces the impending arrival of Gen. Sibley in Mankato, with the convicted Dakota prisoners. (*Newspapers*)

**"The Punishment of the Indians." *St. Peter Tribune*. 15 November 1862. pg. 1, col. 2. \***

This article expresses anger at the possibility that President Lincoln may not allow the execution of the convicted prisoners.<sup>70</sup> (*Newspapers*)

**Ramer, James. Lower Agency, MN. November 7, 1862-November 9, 1862. *James T. Ramer Diary and Letters*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M87. \***

Ramer was a soldier on the prisoner's march to Mankato. He mentions their departure date, the attack at New Ulm, and specific times the group passed specific places. (*Diaries*)

**Ramer, James. November 7, 1862 and November 17, 1862. *William R. Marshall Papers, 1853-1894*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/.M369. \***

This is from Ramer's narrative of the 7th Minnesota Volunteer Infantry found in William R. Marshall Papers. Ramer includes here a few details about the women's march, including the date of their departure. (*Diaries*)

**Riggs, Stephen R. to his daughter Martha. Camp Sibley, MN. November 11, 1862. *Stephen R. and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P727.**

This is a letter from Riggs, a missionary that worked with the Dakota, to his daughter in which he mentions the women's march to Ft. Snelling. (*Letters*)

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<sup>70</sup> I was truly shocked at the propaganda-like style of the writing here which was evidently intended to further shock and outrage the reader.

**Riggs, Stephen R. to President Lincoln. St. Anthony, MN. November 17, 1862. *Stephen R. and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P727.**

This is a long letter from Riggs, a Christian missionary, to President Lincoln. In it he condemns the military commission's trials and claims that many of the Dakota were wrongly convicted. He asks the President for clemency for many of the wrongly convicted Dakota, and explains in detail the circumstances of three of these Dakota. (The Riggs' papers contain a handwritten draft of this letter, not the actual letter sent to President Lincoln.) (*Letters*)

**"The Ringleaders to be Hung." *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. pg. 2, col. 3. \***

This article reads with the tone of a modern editorial, and comments on the rumor that President Lincoln was only going to allow Dakota "ringleaders" to be executed. Objecting to any limit on the number of prisoners that should be executed the article states, "If the Government will not execute them, the people must." (*Newspapers*)

**Scantlebury, Thomas. October 25, 1862 and November 8, 1862. *Thomas Scantlebury and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P2276.**

Scantlebury was a soldier that accompanied the prisoner's march to Mankato. He offers a few details about the Indian camp at the Lower Agency and the march to Mankato. (*Diaries*)

**"Sibley Coming." *Mankato Semi WeeklyRecord*. 8 November 1862. p. 2. col. 1. \***

This article reports on the movements of specific troops, troops having gone out from Mankato to meet Sibley's march, and the results of the military commission trials. (*Newspapers*)

**Sibley to Marshall. Camp Release, MN. October 13, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 275. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

A letter from Sibley to Marshall, instructing him to go on a short expedition to round up Indians in the countryside near Lac qui Parle or between Lac qui Parle and Coteau des Prairies. Sibley instructs Marshall to tell the Indians that they must surrender but that the government's "purpose is not to punish innocent persons." Sibley also orders Marshall to not allow his men to abuse the Indians with violence, and not to allow any "insult to the females." (*Letters*)

**Sibley to Captain J. C. Whitney. Camp Release, MN. October 14, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 276. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

A letter from Sibley to Captain J. C. Whitney, who was in command at Yellow Medicine, with instructions on how to secure the prisoners; what to feed the Indian women, children, and unconvicted men; and not to allow any Indians to stray from the camp. (*Letters*)

**Sibley to Pope. Camp Release, MN. October 11, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 273. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

A letter from Sibley to Pope. Sibley mentions the number of Indians to be sent on the women's march, how this will effect the strength of his numbers, his intention to sweep the countryside of Indians, and how he will not destroy some of the good houses he has seen on the reservation unless instructed to do so. (*Letters*)

**Sibley to Pope. Camp Release, MN. October 13, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 274. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

A letter from Sibley to Pope, in which he discusses the number of Indian prisoners he has in custody, the effect dispatching the women's march will have on the strength of his troops, his request of a leave of absence, and permission to convene a general court-martial in order to try a number of soldiers that had deserted. (*Letters*)

**“The Sioux at Fort Snelling.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862. pg. 4, col. 1. \***

This article mentions the expected arrival of Lt. Col. Marshall and the women's march at Ft. Snelling, stating that the route taken by the group went from Red Wood, via Ft. Ridgley and Henderson. It mentions the attack on the march at Henderson, and the specific companies that were with Marshall on the march. (*Newspapers*)

**“The Sioux War.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 1 November 1862. p. 1. \***

A mention of the trials of the Dakota prisoners. (*Newspapers*)

**“The Sioux War.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. November 8, 1862. p. 1.**

This article reports on the expedition to Lake Shetek where a group of soldiers was sent to bury the dead. It details the discovery this group made of a group of skeletons.  
(*Newspapers*)

**“The Sioux War.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 22 November 1862. p. 1.** <sup>71</sup>

This is a very long article about the trials of the Dakota.

**Stanton, Edwin M., Secretary of War to Pope. Washington, D. C. October 14, 1862.  
*Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 276. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \****

Letter from Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton to Pope, instructing Pope to use his force to enforce peace and keep settlers safe from the Dakota. (*Letters*)

**“Stoned.” *St. Peter Tribune*. 15 November 1862. p. 2, col. 2-3. \***

This is a brief mention of the attack the settlers of New Ulm made on the prisoner’s march. (*Newspapers*)

**“Terriffic Scenes! Intense Excitement!” *St. Peter Tribune*. 8 December 1862. p. 1, col. 3-4. \***

This article reports on the attempt of a group of settlers to attack the prisoners that were being held at Mankato awaiting execution. (*Newspapers*)

**Thoreau, Henry D. to F. B. Sanborn. Redwing, MN. June 25, 1862. *The Minnesota: Forgotten River*, by Evan Jones. MHS Call number: F614.M46 J6.**

This is a long letter from Thoreau to his biographer that contains an account of a trip Thoreau took up the Minnesota River on a steamboat in June 1861. This letter contains interesting details of the natural environment surrounding the river, the character of the river itself, and the experience of traveling on it. (*Letters*)

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<sup>71</sup> There is a copy of this article in the documents section of the report, however, it has not been transcribed.

**“The Train Attacked at New Ulm.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. pg. 1-2. \***

This is a report of the attack on the prisoner’s march by the settlers of New Ulm. Notably, the newspaper condemns the behavior of the settlers for attacking shackled prisoners who had already been convicted.<sup>72</sup> (*Newspapers*)

**Watson, Amos B. *Reminiscences of the Sioux Outbreak*. MHS Microfilm. Call number: M582, roll 3, Frame 590. \***

A detailed account of the hanging of the condemned prisoners at Mankato. (*Books*)

**Watson, Charles H. to his father. Lower Agency, MN. November 5, 1862. *Charles H. Watson Letters*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P958. \***

This letter from Watson, a soldier that accompanied the prisoner’s march to Mankato, mentions that the women’s march was going to leave on November 6th and was being given rations. (*Letters*)

**Watson, Charles H. to his father. Camp Lincoln, MN. November 14, 1862. *Charles H. Watson Letters*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P958. \***

This letter from Watson, a soldier that was on the prisoner’s march, details the attack on that march at New Ulm. (*Letters*)

**Watson, Charles H. to his father. Camp Pope, MN. June 12, 1863. *Charles H. Watson Letters*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P958.**

In a letter to his father written from Camp Pope on June 12, 1863, Charles “Herb” Watson writes in detail how many men had been assigned to carry what equipment.

**West, Nathaniel. *The Ancestry, Life, and Times of Hon. Henry Hastings Sibley, LL.D.* Saint Paul, MN: Pioneer Press Pub. Co., 1889. MHS call number: F 605.1 .S56 W5.**

A brief mention of the prisoner’s march and the attack on them at New Ulm, and of the women’s march, its departure dates, and numbers of marchers. (*Books*)

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<sup>72</sup> Any sentiment that placed settlers in the wrong for their treatment of a Dakota was extremely rare in my research.

**Williamson to Treat. Lower Sioux Agency, MN. November 5, 1862. *The Letters of John P. Williamson, in American Board of Comissions for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) Correspondance 1827-1878.* MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: BA10/.A512b.**

A long letter from Williamson, a missionary that worked with the Dakota. He addresses the destruction at the Lower Agency, individual Indians that are being tried, and his feelings about it all. He condemns the trials of the military commission as unsound and unfair. He states that he will accompany the women's march to Ft. Snelling and continue his work with them "if my dwelling is only a tent for the winter." (*Letters*)

**Williamson to Treat. Lower Sioux Agency, MN. November 28, 1862. *The Letters of John P. Williamson, in American Board of Comissions for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) Correspondance 1827-1878.* MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: BA10/.A512b. \***

In this long letter Williamson, a missionary that accompanied the women's march to Ft. Snelling, comments on a number of topics. These include Lt. Col. Marshall's character and conduct while on the march, the living conditions of the Dakota at Ft. Snelling, Williamson's living arrangements, and the work he has attempted to start doing with the Dakota. He also talks about the need for a school for the Dakota children in the encampment at Ft. Snelling. (*Letters*)

**Wood, John Kingsley. Lower Agency, MN to Mankato, MN. November 1, 1862-December 20, 1862. *John Kingsley Wood Diary.* MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/W876. \***

Wood was at the Lower Agency in early November 1862. Wood mentions the departure of the women's march from the Lower Agency. He also accompanied the prisoner's march to Mankato and write a few details about that trip. (*Diaries*)

**"A Word from Col. Marshall." *Saint Paul Daily Press.* 8 November 1862. pg. 1, col. 3.**

This article contains Lt. Col. Marshall's request that the settlers in the Minnesota Valley not molest the march of women, children, and unconvicted men that he will be leading through the area. He strongly requests that they be left alone, and the newspaper adds that his wishes should be respected. (*Newspapers*)

## **Transcribed Material: Books, Magazine and Journal Articles, and Websites**

These sources are organized alphabetically by authors last name where possible, or by title.

\*An asterisk after the citation indicates that a photocopy of this item is contained in the material accompanying the report.

**Brown, Samuel. *In Captivity: The Experience, Privations, and Dangers of Samuel J. Brown and Others While Prisoners of the Hostile Sioux during the Massacre and War of 1862.***

**Washington D.C.: G.P.O., 1900. MHS Call number: E83.86. B86 1897. \***

### **SEPARATING THE GOOD FROM THE BAD**

On the 9th of November (1862), the uncondemned Indians and their wives and families, and the wives and families of the condemned and absent Indians, numbering 1,658 souls, were started off for Fort Snelling. Lieut. Col. Marshall of the Seventh regiment, Minnesota Volunteers, with an escort of three companies of soldiers being in command.

### **MANKATO'S ALLOTMENT**

At the same time 392 condemned Indian men and seventeen Indian women as cooks, laundresses, etc. four papooses, and four of the friendlies, as assistants in the care of the prisoners, were started off for Mankato, making 417 in all, Col. Sibley and the main portion of the expedition and Major Brown, superintendent in charge of the Indian prisoners accompanying these.

### **AN ANGERED MOB**

I went along with Col. Marshall's detachment—the train measuring about four miles in length. At Henderson, which we reached on the 11th, we found the streets crowded with an angry and excited populace, cursing, shouting and crying. Men, women and children armed with guns, knives, clubs and stones, rushed upon the Indians, as the train was passing by, and before the soldiers could interfere and stop them, succeeded in pulling many of the old men and women and even children from the wagons by the hair of the head, and beating them, and otherwise inflicting injury upon the helpless and miserable creatures.

### **AS BAD AS SAVAGES**

I saw an enraged white woman rush up to one of the wagons and snatch a nursing babe from its mother's breast and dash it violently upon the ground. The soldiers' instantly seized her and led or rather dragged the woman away and restored the papoose to its mother—limp and almost dead. Although the child was not killed outright, it died a few hours after. The body was quietly laid away in the crotch of a tree a few miles below Henderson and not far from Faxon.

### **THE LAST OF A TRIBAL CUSTOM**

I witnessed the ceremony, which was, perhaps the last of the kind within the limits of Minnesota; that is, the last Sioux Indian "buried" according to one of the oldest and most cherished customs of the tribe.



## MORALIZING UPON HUMAN DEPRAVITY

And here my thoughts reverted to the case of the Indian brave at the dance who boasted in “ghoulish glee” that he had roasted a babe in the oven, and I contrasted it with the case before me. An uncivilized heathen in the one case and a *civilized christian* white woman in the other!

## A BRAVE MAN AND A BRAVE ACT

There was another incident that took place at Henderson which is worth mentioning. I refer to a brave and noble act by one of the bravest and noblest of men—Lieut. Col. Marshall, afterwards governor of Minnesota.

While the train was passing through the town one of the citizens with blood in his eyes and halfcrazed with drink rushed up with a gun leveled at Charles Crawford, one of the friendlies, and was about to fire, when “the bold charger of the plains.” Lieut. Col. Marshall, who happened along on horseback, rushed between them and struck down the gun with his saber and got Crawford out of the way, thus saving a life at the risk of his own. (11)

## AT FORT SNELLING

On the 14th we reached Fort Snelling and placed the Indians in camp.

## WHAT BECAME OF THEM

Here most of them remained—in charge of the military—until the following spring, when they were turned over to the interior department, put into steamboats and taken down the Mississippi river to the Missouri, and up the latter stream to a point called Fort Usher or Usher’s Landing, but afterwards at Fort Thompson or Crow Creek Agency, D. T., about 200 miles above Yankton. In 1866 these Indians were removed down the Missouri to a point now known as Santee Agency, Nebraska. (12)

**Bryant, Charles S., and Abel B. Murch. *A History of the Great Massacre by the Sioux Indians in Minnesota: Including the Personal Narratives of Many Who Escaped*. Cincinnati, OH: Rickey and Carroll Publishers, 1864. MHS Call number: E83.86 .B91 1864.**

On the 7th of November, Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall, with a guard of some fifteen hundred men, started for Fort Snelling, in charge of the other captured Indians, comprising the women and children and such of the men as were not found guilty of any heinous crime by the Military Commission. This detachment received no molestation from the settlers upon the route, and arrived safely at their destination on the 13th. (454-455)

**Cooke, Chauncey H. “A Badger Boy in Blue: The Letters of Chauncey H. Cooke.” *Wisconsin Magazine of History*. Madison 1920-21. v. 4, no. 1-4.**

Nov. 28th—Fort Snelling, Minn. Arrived this noon. A few of the company still here, most of them come and gone. The right wing of our Reg’t came down the Minnesota some days ago bringing with them 1,700 captured Sioux, wives, children, and old men and women of the hostiles. They are camped on the bottoms just below the Fort at the junction of the Minnesota

and Mississippi rivers. They are a broken-hearted, ragged, dejected looking lot. They have a million dogs almost, and you can hear them barking for miles. There are 156 tepees. A Minnesota Reg't is in charge of them and no soldier is allowed inside the tepees. Papooses are running about in the snow barefoot and the old Indians wear thin buckskin moccasins and no stockings. Their ponies are poor and their dogs are starved. They are going to be shipped West into the Black Hills country. Like the children of Israel in the Bible story they are forced to go forever from the homes of their childhood and the graves of their fathers to dwell in the mountains and on the barren plains of a strange land. I lifted up the flaps of a number of their tepees and looked in. Every time I looked in I was met with the gaze of angry eyes. Nearly all of them were alike. Mothers with babies at their breasts, grandmothers and grandsires sat about smoldering fires in the center of the tepee, smoking their long stemmed pipes, and muttering their complaints in the soft guttural tones of the Sioux. The white man's face was their hate and their horror and they showed it by hate in their eyes and their black lowering brows. Why shouldn't they? What had they done? What was their crime? The white man had driven them from one reservation to another. They were weary and broken hearted and desperate at the broken promises of the government. And when they took up arms in desperation for their homes and the graves of their sires they are called savages and red devils. When we white people do the same things we are written down in history as heroes and patriots. Why this difference? I can't see into it. I often think of what father said of justice in the world. That is, that it is the winning party of the lions of the earth, that write its history. He said, "Cataline had anybody but his bitter enemies written his history, might have been shown to be a good man." I have been fooling around the Indian camps all day and my company are all gone home. From where I sit writing these notes in a little niche on the side of the Fort overlooking the camp below I can see the sentinels pacing their rounds and hear the yelping of hungry Indian dogs. My fingers are numb. The cold west wind hits me here and I must quit. I must look for a warm place to sleep tonight and start for home in the morning by the way of Hudson and Eau Claire.

***Dakota Commemorative March Website. "Eye Witness Report from Maza Okiye Win (Isabel Roberts) in 1862 as told to and carried by Elsie Cavender. Passed to Angela Cavender Wilson by Elsie Cavender in 1990." Accessed 7 August 2006, <http://dakota-march.50megs.com/oneredreport1862.html>.***

Eye Witness Report from Maza Okiye Win (Isabel Roberts) in 1862 as told to and carried by Elsie Cavender. passed to Angela Cavender Wilson by Elsie Cavender in 1990.

I first learned of this forced relocation from my grandmother, Elsie Cavender, who carried a narrative account passed down to her from her grandmother, Maza Okiye Win (Woman Who Talks to Iron). Maza Okiye Win was ten years old at the time of the war and thus the accounts of events she relayed to her children and grandchildren were born of her own traumatic hardships. Kunsu (Grandmother) Elsie entitled this story of her grandmother's "Death March," consciously drawing a parallel between this forced march and that of the Bataan Death March during World War II during which 70,000 American and Filipino soldiers were forced to walk a 63-mile journey to a prison camp while facing starvation and poor treatment. Learning of this event from a relative of ours who had experienced it, she saw similarities with the march her grandmother was forced to endure. The following account, which I recorded in 1990 with my grandmother

remains the most descriptive and lengthy one yet documented. It is relayed here in my grandmother's words:

"Right after the 1862 Conflict, most of the Sioux people were driven out of Minnesota. A lot of our people left to other states. This must have been heartbreaking for them, as this valley had always been their home.

My grandmother, Isabel Roberts (Maza Okiye Win is her Indian name), and her family were taken as captives down to Fort Snelling. On the way most of them [the people] walked, but some of the older ones and the children rode in a cart. In Indian the cart was called canpahmihma kawitkotkoka. That means crazy cart in Indian. The reason they called the cart that is because it had one big wheel that didn't have any spokes. It was just one big round board. When they went they didn't grease it just right so it squeaked. You could just hear that noise about a mile away. The poor men, women, old people, and children who had to listen to it got sick from it. They would get headaches real bad. It carried the old people and the children so they wouldn't have to walk. Most of the people just walked. Some of them if they were lucky rode horses.

They passed through a lot of towns and they went through some where the people were real hostile to them. They would throw rocks, cans, sticks, and everything they could think of: potatoes, even rotten tomatoes and eggs. They were throwing these things at them, but the Indians still had to walk through the main streets. So they had to take all that. Then when they would pass through the town they would be all right. A lot of those towns I don't know the names of in English. They used to say them in Indian. The two towns that were the worst they had to go through were Henderson and New Ulm, Minnesota. I didn't know the name in English so I said, "Grandfather, do you know how they call them in English?"

"No, I just know their Indian names," he said.

So then I had to go to Mr. Fred Pearsall. In Indian his name was Wanbdi Ska (White Eagle). He was a white man, but he knew a lot of things about the conflict. He talked Indian just like we do. He knew all those things that happened and he knew just what words to use to describe the times. So I was able to get the names of those towns. They were the worst ones they had to go through.

When they came through New Ulm they threw cans, potatoes, and sticks. They went on through the town anyway. The old people were in the cart. They were coming to the end of the town and they thought they were out of trouble. Then there was a big building at the end of the street. The windows were open. Someone threw hot, scalding water on them. The children were all burned and the old people too. As soon as they started to rub their arms the skin just peeled off. Their faces were like that, too. The children were all crying, even the old ladies started to cry, too. It was so hard it really hurt them but they went on.

They would camp some place at night. They would feed them, giving them meat, potatoes, or bread. But they brought the bread in on big lumber wagons with no wrapping on them. They would just throw it on the ground. They would have them sleep in either cabins or tents. When they saw the wagons coming they would come out of there. They had to eat food like that. So, they would just brush off the dust and eat it that way. The meat was the same way. They had to

wash it and eat it. A lot of them got sick. They would get dysentery and diarrhea and some had cases of whooping cough and small pox. This went on for several days. A lot of them were complaining that they drank the water and got sick. It was just like a nightmare going on this trip.

It was on this trip that my maternal grandmother's grandmother was killed by white soldiers. My grandmother, Maza Okiye Win, was ten years old at the time and she remembers everything that happened on this journey. The killing took place when they came to a bridge that had no guard rails. The horses or stock were getting restless and were very thirsty. So, when they saw water they wanted to get down to the water right away, and they couldn't hold them still. So, the women and children all got out, including my grandmother, her mother, and her grandmother.

When all this commotion started the soldiers came running to the scene and demanded to know what was wrong. But most of them [the Dakota] couldn't speak English and so couldn't talk. This irritated them and right away they wanted to get rough and tried to push my grandmother's mother and her grandmother off the bridge, but they only succeeded in pushing the older one off and she fell in the water. Her daughter ran down and got her out and she was all wet, so she took her shawl off and put it around her. After this they both got back up on the bridge with the help of the others who were waiting there, including the small daughter, Maza Okiye Win.

She was going to put her mother in the wagon, but it was gone. They stood there not knowing what to do. She wanted to put her mother someplace where she could be warm, but before they could get away, the soldier came again and stabbed her mother with a saber. She screamed and hollered in pain, so she [her daughter] stooped down to help her. But her mother said, "Please daughter, go. Don't mind me. Take your daughter and go before they do the same thing to you. I'm done for anyway. If they kill you the children will have no one." Though she was in pain and dying she was still concerned about her daughter and little granddaughter who was standing there and witnessed all this. The daughter left her mother there at the mercy of the soldiers, as she knew she had a responsibility as a mother to take care of her small daughter.

"Up to today we don't even know where my grandmother's body is. If only they had given the body back to us we could have given her a decent funeral," Grandma said. So, at night, Grandma's mother had gone back to the bridge where her mother had fallen. She went there but there was no body. There was blood all over the bridge but the body was gone. She went down to the bank. She walked up and down the bank. She even waded across to see if she could see anything on the other side, but no body, nothing. So she came back up. She went on from there not knowing what happened to her or what they did with the body. So she really felt bad about it. When we were small Grandma used to talk about it. She used to cry. We used to cry with her. "

*(Published in Angela Cavender Wilson, "Grandmother to Granddaughter: Generations of Oral Tradition in a Dakota Family," in Devon Mihesuah, ed., Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians)*

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**Daniels, Jared Waldo. *Jared Daniels Reminiscences*. MHS Manuscript. Collection Call number: P2247. \***

Fifteen hundred women, children, and the men found innocent, with those who had befriended the captives were sent down to Ft. Snelling under a strong Guard where they remained all winter, and four hundred prisoners, manacled, under a guard were taken to Mankato where they were to be confined until disposed of by the authorities at Washington. Thus, in less than three months the outbreak among the Sioux had been suppressed, and many of the participants in the great massacre taken, condemned and secured against any chance of escape. (20-21)

**Heard, Isaac V. D. *History of the Sioux War and Massacres of 1862 and 1863*. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1864. MHS Call Number: E83.86.H43 1864. \***

On the 7th of November, Colonel Marshall, with the inmates of the Indian camp, about 1,500 in all, consisted of women and children, and a few innocent males, started to Fort Snelling. When the outrage broke out the Indians said that they would winter their squaws near St. Paul. The prediction was to be accomplished, but the fact was not to be as agreeable as supposed. (240)

At six o'clock our drums were beating for forward march. The general was one of the earliest of risers. He had all the camp around and at breakfast before four. It was a disagreeable morning; "the owl through all his feathers was a-cold," and so were the bold "sojer" boys. We soon cantered away, and left the aforesaid quondam kitchen, but henceforth immortalized court-house, in which three of us had slumbered for many a pleasant night (and which the general therefore playfully characterized as a "den"), probably forever. When the command passed new Ulm the inhabitants were engaged in disinterring the street for more appropriate burial. Hearing that we were passing by, they all rushed forth, men, women, and children, armed with clubs, pitchforks, hoes, brickbats, knives, and guns, and attacked the prisoners. The women were perfectly furious; they danced around with their aprons full of stones, and cried for an opportunity to get at the prisoners, upon whom they poured the most violent abuse. Many rushed forward and discharged a shower of stones. One woman, who had a long knife in her hand, was especially violent in her demonstrations, and another pounded an Indian in the face till she broke his jaw, and he fell backward out of the wagon. They were the brutal murderers of their friends. The prisoners cowered low, and the Negro Godfrey, who lived in the neighborhood of this theatre of his exploits and was well known in New Ulm, took good care to cover his head with his blanket, and crouch close down in his wagon. The expedition soon reached Mankato, near which a permanent camp for the winter was established, called "Camp Lincoln." (242-243)

***The Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail*, 2003 edition. Henderson, MN: Sibley County Historical Society, 2003. MHS Call number: F612.S56 R44 2003.**

After Henderson was established in 1853 by Joseph Brown, it became an important river port because the only reasonable means of travel at that time was by boat from St. Paul and Fort

Snelling. Henderson, therefore, became a very important place as a river port and overland shipping point.

As more adventurers and settlers came down to seek their fortune or some property they could call their own, it soon became evident that a place must be found that would afford an exit from the deep valley up on the vast expanse of land extending westward into the horizon. Surely many of these migrants were the adventurous type with an urge to explore and seek what was in the great beyond. There were those that wanted to trade with the Indians. It seems there were no usable passages up these steep bluffs that extended along the Minnesota River valley except at Henderson, where there was a dry gully or ravine which no longer served as a runoff point in times of heavy rain, and was of such nature that man could traverse up to the plateau above, even with equipment. Old timers maintained that there were no other passages for miles to the north that could be used to bring a wagon up out of the valley, so that natural passage at Henderson was of great importance for some years, and to this day is still referred to as the "Fort Trail". To the south of here a passage was evident at Traverse Des Sioux, long used by the Indians.

There is no other known route that could have been followed on the "Walker's Landing to Fort Ridgely Trail," except that it wended its way southward along in the valley until it came to the "Fort Hill" at Henderson to proceed westward. So it is quite significant why Henderson became so important as a river port after its founding, from where shipments were made by wagon overland to Fort Ridgely and other outposts in the west. In a report from an early newspaper of that era, it stated that as much as fifty tons of material landed and freighted to the Fort alone per week, let alone (sic) that which was bought and used by the settlers. (1-2)

It must be understood that these trails or roads did not follow along on section or boundary lines, but passed along on the higher or well-drained land in every respect, regardless of how many curves of bends there were in it. When it was absolutely necessary to cross a swampy piece of land, large logs were brought in and laid side by side crosswise to traffic, and then covered with a layer of earth. The government had decreed whenever bridges had to be built to cross streams that they could be constructed with logs not less than 12 inches in diameter, placed into the earth down to solid ground to serve as pillars, over which heavy hewn timbers were to be placed to serve as spans. On top of this a layer of heavy planks were laid to provide passage for traffic. These bridges usually only had a width of 12 feet providing one-way passage. (5)

In Sibley County's pioneer days shipping was entirely by way of river navigation and all shipping was done by steamboat on the Minnesota River during the seasons when this was possible. Thousands of tons of freight were brought to Henderson and also other points as many steamboats plied the river. When freight had to be carried over land, the task became more difficult and was accomplished with wagons and carts drawn by horses or even oxen. (5-6)

Rekar's Grove was near the western edge of heavy timberland, which extended along the Minnesota River Valley also westward on either side of the High Island Creek and the Rush River valleys. The trail so far had followed along westward in heavy timber, when shortly past Rekar's Grove the prairie opened up. This entire area of prairie was called Prairie Mount. It was truly a sort of mount, as it was the divide between the High Island Creek and Rush River draining basins. The Fort Ridgely Trail followed along the higher elevations of this divide, where throughout the northern part of Kelso Township the elevated land became more noticeably higher, which in early years was also known as "The Kelso Ridge." This prairie area had tall

grasses and now and then, on knolls, a variety of hazelnut bushes, plum trees, thorn apples and “blackboss bushes,” all edible, with occasional wild grape vining among them. On the edges of swamps that were in this area, “Pussy” willow bushes were growing with an abundance of “cat tails” sticking out above the water line, and also small ponds were adorned likewise. These willows were fast growing and produced new stems annually that were slender and long, which the pioneers would gather in late fall for the cooper factory at Henderson. Here the slender willow stalks were split in halves and used for hoops around barrels that were manufactured there. An ingenious method of notching was employed to splice the willow bands to stay together without requiring other fasteners. As every conceivable commodity was shipped in wooden barrels or casks, there was an ever-ready market for these containers. Practically all the material used in this factory, such as staves, hoops, etc., was acquired locally, which afforded extra income for the sellers. The factory also made beer kegs and strong barrels for other liquids. (13)

**Hill, Alfred James. *History of Company E, of the Sixth Minnesota Regiment of Volunteer Infantry*. St. Paul: T. H. Lewis, 1899. MHS Call number: E515.5 6th .H. \***

On the 18th of the month (September 1862) the expeditionary force took up the line of march from its base at Fort Ridgley. Crossing at the ferry near by, the route pursued was on the south side of the Minnesota River, fording the Red Wood at the usual place, and touching Wood Lakes about three miles from Yellow Medicine, which was reached on the 22nd. (13)

The return March was begun on the 23rd of October, on which day the weather turned suddenly cold and a high wind rose, which blew down many of the tents at Yellow Medicine that night. Arrived at the Lower Agency on the 25th, and then went into camp at Camp Sibley; and remained there till the 8th of November, and then resumed the march. The next day the company was detailed as guard for the prisoners, two men being assigned to each wagon. Though the troops left the village of New Ulm a mile or so to the left, yet the citizens, exasperated at the sight of the Indians in the wagons guarded by the soldiers, lined the road opposite the town in great excitement, hurling stones and endeavoring to get at the Indians, in which they partly succeeded. On the 10th we arrived at Blue Earth River Bridge, and camped a little beyond it, on the townsite of Le Hillier (L’Huillier) and immediately south of the isolated bluff at the mouth of the river,—the camp being called Camp Lincoln. (15)

**Jones, Evan. *The Minnesota: Forgotten River*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962. MHS Call Number: F614.M46 J6.**

No one has written more exactly about steamboat travel on the river [than Henry D. Thoreau]. It was a capricious stream, and there were few years when it was navigable all summer long. The announcement of a timetable that might be adhered to was greeted with laughter. Nothing was more uncertain than a steamboat journey on the Minnesota. (109)

To deal with the Minnesota, the rivermen had designed boats of shallow draft. In March, 1857, the *Equator* was described as “a truly Minnesota River boat. She is owned exclusively by

citizens of Minnesota, and will be kept running for the accommodation of citizens in the dull season as well as in the more active. There are no Pittsburgh interests in the 'Equator' to direct her from the trade. The proprietors of the 'E' will have a boat in readiness at the commencement of the low water season that will require only a heavy dew to enable her to run. (110-111)

***Military Roads: A Brief History of the Construction of Highways by the Military Establishment and a Gazetteer of the Military Roads in Continental United States. National Highway Users Conference: Washington, D. C., 1935. MHS Call number: HE355 .N19 1935.***

#### Early Military Roads

During the early decades of American history, the army was the principal instrumentality engaged in road building. In early campaigns, roads were hastily and often crudely constructed by the military, usually along existing Indian trails. The opening of such routes through the wilderness was inescapable when troop movements were of any proportions, or were accompanied by supply trains and artillery. After the land was occupied, settlers soon followed, using the military trails as commercial and migratory wagon routes. (1)

Throughout all time world history has been made by military campaigns, the success or failure of which was dictated by the presence or absence of adequate road nets. Even in the most primitive times, armies had to make the terrain passable for troops and equipment by opening trails through the wilderness. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the army supply columns were composed of vast trains of heavy four-wheeled wagons drawn by horses, mules or oxen. Military transport has always, since the earliest time recorded in history, included water transport and animal road transport. The American Civil War marked the first extended and organized use of railroad as an element of transport for the supply of an army in the field. (2)

***Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 1. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005.***

Extracted from the "narrative of Sergeant Ramer":

October 24th Camp release was abandoned, and the entire command, with prisoners and friendly Indians, marched for the lower agency, where we arrived the 26th and established Camp Sibley. [September 26, 1862] The trial of the prisoners proceeded, and battalion drill of the Seventh by Colonel Miller was begun. November 7th Lieutenant Colonel Marshall was put in command of a detachment (Captain Culver's company of the Fifth and Folsom's of the Eighth) and started to conduct the 2,000 friendly Indians to Fort Snelling. He had difficulty in protecting the Indians from the vengeance of the whites on the way, but got through safely. He joined us at Mankato a month afterward. (353)



***Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005.**

From the report of First Lieut. John F. Bishop, Co. B, Fifth Minnesota Infantry, Sheldon, Iowa, Sept. 5, 1887:

...Between the creek and ferry we found 2 more citizens dead in the road—one was the ferryman. These citizens all appeared to have been overtaken and murdered within a few minutes of our arrival. The ferry at that time was located about one mile down the river from Lower Sioux Agency, and I think about eleven miles above Fort Ridgley. The Minnesota river at this point keeps close to the bluffs on the southwest side. These bluffs at that time were covered with a thick growth of hazel-brush and small trees, while on the east side was a wide bottom, covered with heavy, high grass. (167)

A young Indian whom I had often befriended and who was captured by General Sibley, told me one night while in camp near Henderson while en route to Fort Snelling, under charge of General Marshall, that he was in the fight at the ferry, and that Little Crow had about 325 or 350 armed warriors, about 50 warriors from the upper band and about 20 or 25 Winnebagoes besides some boys with bows and arrows, whom they did not consider fighters. (170)

***Minnesota History Quarterly.* 11:131. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society, 1930.**

Continued low water in the years following the signing of the treaty of Traverse des Sioux greatly retarded the growth of steamboating. After the usual spring floods the Minnesota River would suddenly dry up and, notwithstanding the efforts of steamboats to rub their bellies over the innumerable sandbars that blocked the way, only a few score trips were made each season. (131)

**Potter, Theodore. "Captain Potter's Recollections of Minnesota Experiences." *Minnesota History Bulletin*, vol. 1. St. Paul, MN. Minnesota Historical Society.**

On the morning of December 26th our company was ordered to march to Mankato to act as a guard at the execution of the Indians. We were in our saddles and on the way before daylight. The distance was twelve miles. The thermometer registered thirty-five degrees below zero, and when we reached Mankato, many of the men had frozen ears and feet, and suffered severely from the intense cold.

At Mankato we met for the first time several other companies of our regiment, who had been ordered there to guard the Indian prisoners from violence while the thirty-nine were being executed. Hundreds of angry men from all over the state who had suffered at the hands of these savages, were camped in sight of town, well armed and determined that the two hundred eighty-two Indians who were not to be executed that day by the law should suffer death by their hands.

Colonel Miller, who was in command of the troops, had a force of [a] full thousand men, including one battery of artillery. The execution took place early in the afternoon. All of the thirty-nine Indians were ranged on one platform to be executed at the same moment in sight of a vast multitude of people, besides the two thousand troops. At the appointed time W. H. Dooley,

the former chief of scouts, whose family had been killed by the Indians at Lake Shetek, stepped forward, and with an ax cut the two inch rope that help the scaffolding suspended, and dropped the entire number in the tight grasp of death. Ten days before their death they had been taken from the barracks and put in a stone building near and in plain sight of where the gallows was being built. Missionaries who had formerly been with them for years were permitted with them during these ten days. When the time came for them to go onto the gallows, they had asked to have the chains taken from their legs so they could go on in Indian style, single file. This they did, singing an Indian war song, joined in by all the other prisoners. Then each Indian placed the rope around his own neck and sang while the caps were being drawn down over their eyes. For five minutes after the scaffold fell everything was as hushed and silent as death itself. Then the crowd began quietly to disperse. . . .

The Indians were ordered to be buried on an island in the river near where they were executed and all in one grave, and a strong guard was placed to protect their remains. That night our company was returned to St. Peter. On the way several sleighs passed us at different times with only two men in each sleigh. The surgeon of our regiment, Dr. Weiser, was with us, and said to me that it looked as if those sleighs might have dead Indians in them in spite of the guard at the grave. I replied by assuring him that if there were Indians in those sleighs and they were dead, there was no danger from them of losing his scalp. After reaching St. Peter and having supper at the Nicolet (sic) Hotel, the doctor invited me upstairs to the third floor, saying he had some valuable Indian relics he would like to show me. On entering the rooms, there lay three of the Indians that had been buried that afternoon and placed under a strong guard of a full company of live Minnesota soldiers. And the great mystery was how these Indians got out of there under the very eyes and in spite of the watchfulness of those guards. And it was soon afterwards known that they had all escaped the guard and the grave and that some of them had gone to Europe. And that was all the punishment the settlers of Minnesota got out of the Indians for the fifteen hundred lives lost and property destroyed, in any direct way by themselves or the government. (468-471)

**Watson, Amos B. *Reminiscences of the Sioux Outbreak*. MNHS Microfilm. Call number: M582, roll 3, frame 590. \***

November 8th, the whole command with the prisoners shackled in wagons started for Mankato. On the way, at New Ulm, the citizens attacked the train and tried to kill the prisoners, but the guard kept them back. Here I will mention one little incident that happened: We passed the town about one mile to the south of it; however, the citizens were out there, women with their aprons full of brick-bats. There were two rows of guards on each side of the wagons. I was guard in the side next to the town. The first I know one very large German woman slipped through in front of me, and hit one of the Indians on the head with a large stone. Well, he fell backwards out of the wagon, he being shackled to another Indian that held him, so he was dragged about five rods. Then myself and comrade picked him up and put him back in the wagon, (I think the poor fellow had a very sore head). We arrived at Camp Lincoln November 10th. Winter had set in and it was cold and dreary camping. Dec 5th, Camp Lincoln was abandoned and command moving into quarters in vacant buildings in Mankato. Here, on the 26th day of December, 1862, 38 Indians were hanged from one gallows. They had been found guilty upon trial of court martial of murdering whites. It was a public hanging. The gallows were built in the street in front of the

prison, and it was estimated that there were 4000 people on the ground. Our company was stationed on the west side of the gallows as guards. The Indians came out from their jail and marched up on the platform and took their places. Some of them were dancing, some singing, and some were smoking. The gallows were built square a post through the center with a rope to hold the platform on which the Indians stood. There was a man there whose whole family the Indians had massacred, he alone having escaped. Now, he wanted the privilege of cutting the rope, which the officers granted him. As he cut the rope and dropped, one Indian facing our company broke his rope. Myself and two others picked him up and hung him up again. After the doctors had pronounced them all dead, we took them down and placed them in army wagons, hauled them to a sand-bar in the Minnesota River, and buried them about two feet deep in the sand. The next morning I went down to where they were buried, and they were all gone. The doctors had gobbled them all up. There were hundreds of doctors there from different cities all over the union.

**West, Nathaniel. *The Ancestry, Life, and Times of Hon. Henry Hastings Sibley, LL.D.* Saint Paul, MN: Pioneer Press Pub. Co., 1889. MHS call number: F 605.1 .S56 W5**

...The work of the commission finished, and the time for the troops to go into winter quarters having come, the camp was removed from the Lower Agency to Camp Lincoln, between Mankato and South Bend. Here, to await further orders from the United States Government, four hundred manacled Sioux, condemned and uncondemned, chained in pairs together, and crowded in wagons containing ten to twelve each, were conducted, under a military guard of 1,500 infantry and cavalry, by General Sibley in person. The procession was such as Minnesota had never seen. Reaching New Ulm, the people made an insane assault upon the prisoners, one woman, frenzied with rage, cleaving in twain, with a hatchet, the jaw of an Indian, another breaking a skull, the crowd, composed mostly of women, pelting with stones and bricks, till General Sibley, as a prudential measure, gave orders to pass the prisoners and troops around and outside of the town.

November 10, 1862, the names of the three hundred and three convicted Indians and half-breeds were forwarded to President Lincoln, by Major General Pope, accompanied by a complete record of the charges, specifications, and testimony in each case, to secure his approval of the sentence, and obtain the necessary order for the execution of each. At the same time, both Governor Ramsey and General Pope urged upon the president, in the most decided terms, the instant and capital punishment of all the condemned, without exception.<sup>73</sup> Three days previously, November 7th, General Sibley had dispatched Lieutenant Colonel Marshall from Camp Release to Fort Snelling, with 1,800 captive Indians, mostly women and children, under a strong military escort, the whole train measuring four miles in length, and reaching its destination November 13th. (280-281)

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<sup>73</sup> Rebellion Record, Vol. XIII, pp. 787, 788; Heard's Sioux War, p. 267.

## Transcribed Material: Diaries and Journals

These sources are organized chronologically.

\*An asterisk after the citation indicates that a photocopy of this item is contained in the material accompanying the report.

**McFall, Orlando. August 17, 1862. *Narrative of the Sioux Indian Massacre in 1862*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M582, frame 381.**

McFall was a member of the 5th Minnesota Infantry Company C.

Sunday Aug 17 We marched 22 miles due East from the Fort (Fort Ridgley) on the old Government Road. We camped on the night of the 17th in a grove (?) situated at the junction of the Government road and a road running due north ... New Auburn and Glencow (sic) We took an early start on the morning of the 18th and marched 20 miles to New Auburn. About one half mile north of the town we came to a beautiful camping place...

**Carrell, Austin. October 8, 1862-November 9, 1862. *Samuel D. Carrell and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/.C314. \***

Fort Snelling Oct. 8th

We got orders to march to day (sic) we are to be mounted. We are to go and report to Sibley.

...

Fort Snelling Oct. 12

This is the holy Sabbath. I have been riding (?) all day the boys are anxious to start.

Camp about 9 from the Fort. Oct 13th we are camped on a little stream in a grove it is a nice place we left the fort about 2 o'clock.

Oct. 14th 1862

We are camped on a little stream called Jordan it is a nice little stream we came through some very poor country to-day it is a nice little stream . . . we came through Shockapee (sic) to day it is a nice little town

Oct. 15th 1862

We are camped at Henderson we came through 2 or 3 towns the first was St Lawrence next bellplain Flaxan Ferry and Henderson.

October 16th

For about 10 or 15 miles from our camped it was settled after that they (sic) was no horses we are camped tonight on a little lake they (sic) was a man lived here but he left and left all his \_\_\_\_\_ furniture in the house.

Fort Ridgeley (sic) Oct 17th

We got to this place about 2 oclock we seen no horses on the road we seen where they was one but the Indians had \_\_\_\_\_ it saw a steam wagon.

Fort Ridgeley (sic) Oct 18th

We have been here to the fort we have been getting our horses shod leave here tomorrow I saw the bones of the dead Indian he was buried some of the boys dug him up some of the boys feet pretty sore I guess some of then will feel sorer . . .

Oct 19th

we are here to the lower agency the Indians have burned everything here here is where they commenced (comerced?)

Yellow Medicine Oct 20th

we got here about sun down the Indians have burnt this place they was agood many nice houses they have 204 indian prisoners here we are to go back tomorrow to Redwood and take about 1500 squaws and their children

Red Wood Oct 21st

Camp about 5 miles from Yellow Medicine we have all our family with us they are a nice looking set I tell you.

...

Lower Agency Nov 7

it has been very nice day for this time of the year we are to leave here tomorrow for South Bend

Camp Sibley Nov 8

we have came about 20 miles to day we are camped where they (sic) was a family all killed

Camp Sibley Nov 9

to day Sunday but I did not know it until about noon some of the boys sayed (sic) it was but I forgot it rite (sic) off we came through New Ulm had quite a battle there they came out with axes spades and brickbats and got them the Indians

**Scantlebury, Thomas. October 25, 1862 and November 8, 1862. *Thomas Scantlebury and Family Papers*. (MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P2276).**

25th—Arrived at the Lower Agency and camped. The Indians were put into a new prison built on purpose for them and we remained here about two weeks.

Nov 8th—We then marched for Mankato, having most beautiful weather for marching arrived there in two and half days distance 60 miles camping a mile and a half west of town.

**Wood, John Kingsley. Lower Agency, MN to Mankato, MN. November 1, 1862-December 20, 1862. *John Kingsley Wood Diary*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/W876. \***

Nov 1 [1862] Cold and we get a little snow

2 nothing of importance

3 pleasant I went over to the guard house and while standing around there watching the squaws bring the vituels (sic) to the indians some squaws brought a sick girl that was dying up there to see her friends she has a father and two brothers and a number of cousins there and they all come out and shook her hand and looked at her a moment and went back all but the old man he leaned on the wagon wheel and looked at her for half an hour without saying a word to anyone it was rather a solmn occasion if it was an Indian girl and I almost pittied (sic—pitied?) the old man

4 our captain is a better and a much diferent (sic) man than he was that petition done him lots of good it learnt him he was not dealing with school boys the boys drive a big traid (sic) with the squaws for trinkets in exchange for bread they picke (sic) up everything for mementoes (sic)

5 I got a pipe to day for Willard for a loaf of bread

6 the most of the squaws started to day for St Paul they had rations delt out to them before starting the Red Wing band getting their rations there was some fine looking indian girls among them or rather half bread (sic) they was more or less white

7 we got orders on dress prade (sic) to be ready to march at 5 in the morning

8 we got up at 2 and got started at 6 marched 25 miles this is the last day that I cooked

9 started 6 and marched 19 miles passed New Ulm about 10 did not go through town because the inhabitants were down on the indians

11 cold and I am glad I am out of cooking I passed the guard at night and went down to mancato (sic) but it is late I could not get eany (sic) butter

...

[Dec] 20 Had an other (sic) battalion drill and we received marching orders on dress parade we have got to march to Mancato (sic) to protect the indian prisoners from the settlers so we have got no furlow yet I think we shall far more like killing the indians then we shall like protecting them

**Danielson, John. November 7, 1862-November 10, 1862. *History of Company G of 7th Minnesota Volunteers, War of the Rebellion*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1993.**

Nov. 7 [1862] Got orders to march down the river in the morning . . . south side.

9 Camped 18 miles from South Bend. Received orders to remain in the state during winter.

10 Camp Lincoln, 1 ½ miles below South Bend near Mankato.

**Ramer, James. Lower Agency, MN. November 7, 1862-November 9, 1862. *James T. Ramer Diary and Letters*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M87. \***

7th

To day is a fine day and every one is full of fun, this evening we received marching orders, to be ready to march at six oclock in the morning.

8th

We was on the march at sunrise  
we had a pleasant day  
we passed Fort Ridgley at noon  
we pitched our tents a six oclock  
the distance traveled to day is 23 miles.

Nov 9th 1862

We was on the march at daylight we passed New Ulm at ten oclock the citizens tried to get a hold of the prisoners the women was worse than the men they threw stones like hail they hurt some very bad we pitched our tents at six oclock today we marched twenty miles.

Nov 10th

We started at six oclock, we passed South Bend at one oclock. we stopped half way between South Bend and Mankato. It seems more like civilization to see the women come to the door and see us pass by.

Nov 11th

The weather is very cold and disagreeable.

**Ramer, James. November 7, 1862 and November 17, 1862. *William R. Marshall Papers, 1853-1894*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/.M369. \***

From Ramer's Narrative of the 7th Minnesota Volunteer Infantry found in William R. Marshall Papers.

November 7 Lt. Col. Marshall was put in command of a guard, Capt. Culver's of the 5th and Folsom's of the 8th, to conduct the 2000 friendly Indians to Fort Snelling. He joined us at Mankato a month afterward.

On November 17th the 6th Minnesota started to Fort Snelling where about this time General Sibley moved his head quarters leaving Colonel Steven Miller of the 7th Minnesota in command. The friendly Indians and squaws and children were sent from camp Sibley to Fort Snelling under guard of Captain Folsom's Company of the 8th and Lieutenant Culver's Company of the 5th, a few days previous to our leaving here."

**Gere, Thomas. November 16, 1862. Fort Snelling, MN. *William B. and Thomas P. Gere Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P2434.**

Fort Snelling, Nov. 16th, 1862.

The troops came, pursued the Indians,—captured many; we were still left at the Fort. Twenty-four of our brave companions were sleeping their last sleep on the banks of the Minnesota, having fallen on the first day of the outbreak. We paid our tribute of respect to their memory placing their remains in one grave at Fort Ridgely. May the foul fiends who took them from us be driven from the face of the earth! I will not attempt a narrative of the war:—our forces have been very successful, - four hundred of the devils have been condemned to death,—are awaiting execution,—I had the pleasure of seeing them in chains. The squaws, papooses etc. to the number of eighteen hundred have been removed hither, for what purpose I have seen no one who knows. We left Fort Ridgely (sic) on Saturday the 9th inst. as part of an escort to this train. We arrived here Thursday at noon, and are on duty in this old fort once more. We are expecting to march soon for Dixie. God speed the hour! ...



## Transcribed Material: Letters

These sources are organized chronologically.

\*An asterisk after the citation indicates that a photocopy of this item is contained in the material accompanying the report.

**Thoreau, Henry D. to F. B. Sanborn. Redwing, MN. June 25, 1862. *The Minnesota: Forgotten River*, by Evan Jones. MHS Call number: F614.M46 J6.**

Redwing Minnesota June 25th 1861

Mr. Sanborn,  
Dear Sir,

After spending some three weeks in and about St. Paul, St. Anthony, and Minneapolis, we made an excursion in a steamer some 300 or more miles up the Minnesota (St. Peter's) River, to Redwood, or the Lower Sioux Agency, in order to see the plains and the Sioux, who were to receive their annual payment there. This is eminently *the* river of Minnesota, for she shares the Mississippi with Wisconsin, and it is of incalculable value to her. It flows through a very fertile country, destined to be famous for its wheat; but it is a remarkable winding stream, so that Redwood is only half as far from its mouth by land as by water. There was not a straight reach a mile in length as far as we went,—generally you could not see a quarter of a mile of water, and the boat was steadily turning this way or that. At the greater bends, as the Traverse des Sioux, some of the passengers were landed and walked across to be taken in on the other side. Two of three times you could have thrown a stone across the neck of the isthmus while it was from one to three miles around it. It was a very novel kind of navigation to me. The boat was perhaps the largest that had been up so high, and the water was rather low (it had been about 15 feet higher). In making a short turn, we repeatedly and designedly ran square into the steep and soft bank, taking in a cart-load of earth, this being more effectual than the rudder to fetch us about again; or the deeper water was so narrow and close to the shore, that we were obliged to run and break down at least 50 trees which overhung the water, when we did not cut them off, repeatedly losing part of our outworks, though the most exposed had been taken in. I could pluck almost any plant on the bank from the boat. We very frequently got aground and then drew ourselves along with a windlass and a cable fastened to a tree, or we swung round in the current, and completely blocked up and blockaded the river, one end of the boat resting on each shore. And yet we would haul ourselves round again with the windlass and cable in an hour or 2, though the boat was about 160 feet long and drew some 3 feet of water, or, often water and sand. It was one consolation to know that in such a case we were all the while damming the river and so raising it. We once ran fairly on to a concealed rock, with a shock that aroused all the passengers, and rested there, and the mate went below with a lamp expecting to find a hole, but he did not. Snags and sawyers were so common that I forgot to mention them. The sound of the boat rumbling was the ordinary music. However, as long as the boiler did not burst, we knew that no serious accident was likely to happen. Yet this was a singularly navigable river, more so than the Mississippi above the Falls, and it is owing to its very crookedness. Ditch it straight, and it would

not be very swift, but soon run out. It was from 10 to 15 rods wide near the mouth and from 8 to 10 or 12 at Redwood. Though the current was swift, I did not see a 'rip' on it, and only 3 or 4 rocks. For 3 months in the year I am told it can be navigated by small steamers about twice as far as we went, or to its source in Big Stone Lake, and a former Indian agent told me that at high water it was thought that such a steamer might pass into the Red River.

In short this river proved so very *long* and navigable, that I was reminded of the last letter or two in the Voyages of Baron la Hontan (written near the end of the 17th century, I think) in which he states that after reaching the Mississippi (by the Illinois or Wisconsin), the limit of previous exploration westward, he voyaged up it with his Indians, and at length turned up a great river coming in from the west which he called 'La Riviere Longue' and he relates various improbable things about the country and its inhabitants, so that this letter has been regarded as pure fiction—or more probably speaking a lie. But I am somewhat inclined now to reconsider the matter.

The Governor of Minnesota (Ramsey)—the superintendent of Ind. Affairs in this quarter,—and the newly appointed Ind. agent were on board; also a German band from St. Paul, a small cannon for salutes, and the money for the Indians (aye and the gamblers, it was said, who were to bring it back in another boat). There were about 100 passengers chiefly from St. Paul, and more or less recently from the N. Eastern states; also half a dozen young educated Englishmen. Chancing to speak with one who sat next to me, when the voyage was nearly half over, I found that he was a son of the Rev. Samuel May, and a classmate of yours, and had been looking for us at St. Anthony.

The last of the little settlements on the river was New Ulm, about 100 miles this side of Redwood. It consists wholly of Germans. We left them 100 barrels of salt, which will be worth something more when the water is lowest, than at present.

Redwood is a mere locality, scarcely an Indian village—where there is a store and some houses have been built for them. We were now fairly on the great plains, and looking south, and after walking that way 3 miles, could see no tree in that horizon. The buffalo was said to be feeding within 25 or 30 miles. . . .

A regular council was held with the Indians, who has come in on their ponies; and speeches were made on both sides thro' an interpreter, quite in the described mode; the Indians, as usual, having the advantage in point of truth and earnestness, and therefore of eloquence. The most prominent chief was named Little Crow. They were quite dissatisfied with the white man's treatment of them and probably have reason to be so. This council was to be continued for 2 or 3 days—the payment to be made the 2d day—and another payment to the other bands a little higher up on the Yellow Medicine (a tributary of the Minnesota) a few days thereafter.

In the afternoon the half-naked Indians performed a dance, at the request of the Governor, for our amusement and their own benefit and then we took our leave of them and of the officials who had come to treat with them.

Excuse these pencil marks but my inkstand is *unscrewable* and I can only direct my letter at the bar. I could tell you more and perhaps more interesting things, if I had the time. I am considerably better than when I left home, but still far from well. . . .

Yrs truly

Henry D. Thoreau (107-109)

**Pope to Sibley. St. Paul, MN. October 7, 1862. *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166, frame 649. \***

Headquarters Department of the Northwest  
Saint Paul, Minn., Oct., 7th 1862

Brig. Genl. H. H. Sibley.  
General:

Your dispatch of the 3rd just received renders unnecessary my letter of yesterday. I desire you to disarm and send down to Fort Snelling all the Indians, men, women and children, of the Sioux tribe upon whom you can lay your hands. I shall keep and feed for the winter such as are not hung and shot for their crimes, so that with the sanction of Congress obtained this winter they can all be removed beyond the limits of the State, in the spring.

I am General,  
Your Obdt. Servt.,  
(Signed) Jno. Pope,  
Maj. Genl. Comdg.

**Pope to Sibley. St. Paul, MN. October 10, 1862. *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166, frame 650. \***

Headquarters Department of the Northwest  
Saint Paul, Minn., Oct., 10th 1862

Brig. Genl. H. H. Sibley.  
General:

A Military Commission will assemble there, try and execute all who have in any way been engaged either in the massacre three years ago, or in the late outbreak (sic).

As soon as they have finished with the Yanktons two hundred cavalry will return by way of Sioux Falls City, to Fort Ridgley. The other three hundred with the artillery will pass over to Fort Abercrombie and in connection with the garrison there clean out the Indians along the river for twenty or thirty miles North of that post.

As I wrote to you the other day it will not do to leave any Indians between Ft. Ridgley and Buffalo band of Sisseton, not even these, if they have ever connived (sic) at the late Sioux outrages. How came they to suffer Crow and his band to pass through their country? We have now the means to make a final settlement with all those Indians the opportunity may not occur again. An expedition to Buffalo Village is necessary and should make the most rigid examination of the conduct of that tribe. I have no doubt you will find much plundered property among them. Compensation for having suffered Crow to pass through their country. This alone makes them "participes criminis", in the late outrages and they must be treated accordingly. You have now the opportunity to do the State a great and lasting service. They are expecting it at your hands. Do not allow any false sympathy for the Indians to prevent you from acting with the utmost rigor. Be assured that I will sustain you in whatever measures you adopt to effect the object. There must be no more Indian outbreaks in Minnesota at least from the Sioux.

I am General, Very respectfully,  
Your Obdt. Servt.,  
(Signed) Jno. Pope,  
Maj. Genl. Comdg.

**Pope to Sibley. St. Paul, MN. October 10, 1862. *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166, frame 652. \***

Headquarters Department of the Northwest  
Saint Paul, Minn., Oct., 10th 1862

Brig. Genl. H. H. Sibley.  
General:

It only remains for us to deal with the Indians. All who are guilty whatever be the number should in my judgment be hung, and will be so if the Commission condemn them to that penalty. The whole of the Indians, men, women and children, should be brought as prisoners to the lower agency where the culprits must be executed in the presence of the whole tribe.

When the culprits have been executed all the Sioux, must be brought to Fort Snelling as prisoners until the Govt. decides what disposition to make of them.

Let me again say to you that I regard the destruction of every thing that can sustain life between Ft. Ridgley and Big Stone Lake as very important. We want no Indians straggling down in the direction of the Fort under any pretext. All annuity Indians must be notified that hereafter they will not be permitted on any pretext to leave their reservation, that all the Soldiers have orders to shoot them wherever they are found, and citizens are authorized to do the same. Their only safety hereafter will be on their reservations.

I am General,  
Very respectfully,  
Your Obdt. Servt.,  
(Signed) Jno. Pope,  
Maj. Genl. Comdg.

**Sibley to Pope. Camp Release, MN. October 11, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 273. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

Headquarters Military Expedition  
Camp Release, Oct. 11, 1862.

Maj. Gen. John Pope,  
*Commanding Military District of the Northwest,*

GENERAL: Henry Belland has just arrived with your dispatch of 7th instant. Those of the 6th, referred to, have not yet been received. Your orders relative to the disposition of the Indians will be obeyed as promptly as possible. They will interfere somewhat with my forward

movement, as I designed to leave on the 12th with a portion, or rather the larger part, of my command in pursuit of the refugee Indians. As the order is imperative to send all below, I shall suspend the execution of the sentenced Indians, about 20 in number, and dispatch them with others whom I shall arrest in the neighboring camp this afternoon, to Fort Snelling, to be subject to your direction. The number to be sent down, including my own, will be nearly or quite 1,500; and I trust you have given orders to have them supplied with provisions along the route, or there will be great suffering among them. They must necessarily travel slowly, and they will therefore be many days in reaching Fort Snelling. I shall endeavor to have them en route within two or three days. As I must weaken my force by dispatching at least three companies of infantry to guard the prisoners, I hope you will give orders to Colonel Montgomery to receive the latter at St. Peter and escort them below with his command or part of it, so as to permit the companies of my corps to return and rejoin me from that place.

From the tenor of your dispatch I judge that you do not intend that the infantry shall be employed in the expedition to the Yanktons, but that Colonel Crooks will be dispatched thither with the 600 cavalry you propose to send up. Understanding this to be your intention, I shall, after having disengaged myself of the prisoners, sweep the country between this point and Big Stone lake, with a view to catch the refugee Indians if they are scattered into small parties, or fight them if they assemble in force, which I do not believe they will, unless assisted by the Sissetons and Yanktons; that is not probable, but it is still possible. I shall do all I can to find Little Crow and the few lodges, but the Indians believe him to be fleeing toward the Red River, to take refuge under the British flag. I shall offer a reward for his apprehension, as you direct.

There are many pretty good houses on the Indian reservation near the lower agency which add value to the land, and can be of no future service to the Indians under the plan of operations adopted by you. These I shall not destroy, unless ordered to do so by you. The corn and potatoes there might be gathered and prove useful in military operations in this quarter.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. H. Sibley,

*Brigadier General, Commanding.*

**Pope to Halleck. St. Paul, MN. October 13, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 274. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

St. Paul, Minn. Oct. 13, 1862. –10:40 a. m.

Major General Halleck,

*General-in-Chief:*

Five regiments can be sent from this state by November 1. Please instruct me in time where to send them. The river closes about November 25. Three infantry regiments and such of the regiments of cavalry authorized by War Department as can be raised will remain. It is necessary to keep up the line of posts along the frontier during the winter to induce settlers to return. The troops retained will be sufficient for this purpose and to make the suggested demonstrations on the plains in the spring. The arrangements made in Dakota and Nebraska will insure security there. Letters to that effect received from the governors. Have not yet heard from expedition to Yanktons villages and Chippewa country. There is a strong testimony that white

men led the Indians in late outrages. Do I need further authority to execute Indians condemned by military commission?

Jno. Pope,  
*Major General.*

**Sibley to Pope. Camp Release, MN. October 13, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 274. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

Headquarters Military Expedition  
Camp Release, Oct. 13, 1862.

Maj. Gen. John Pope,  
*Comdg. Department of the Northwest, St. Paul, Minn.,*

GENERAL: According to your orders I have disarmed and secured the Indian men near my camp, and have further given directions to Captain Whitney, in charge of the lower camp of Indians, to do the same, which was no doubt accomplished this morning. I have now 101 Indian men in custody, including the 21 under sentence, all of whom will be sent down as soon as possible, with those from the camp below.

I shall to-day dispatch an expedition of three companies of infantry and 50 mounted men to secure any straggling lodges which may be found about Lac qui Parle, or between there and Coteau des Prairies, about 30 miles distant.

I fine that the process of removing 1,500 men, women, and children to Fort Snelling is likely to tax not only my means of transportation, but my numerical force, so severely as to preclude the hope that anything more than detachment service to points not very far distant can be accomplished by my command until disembarrassed from this important but exceedingly perplexing charge. I have not received your dispatch of the 6th, nor any later than the 7th instant. If you deem proper I will take charge of the removal of the Indians below in person, as I should be very much gratified to have a leave of absence for thirty days. I think a personal conference with you would be of advantage to the public service in the present condition of things; and I think, further, that I can be better spared now from this region than I could perhaps be at a later period.

Very respectfully, general, your obedient servant,  
H. H. Sibley,  
*Brigadier General, Commanding.*

N.B.—Will you please inform me whither, under the sixty-fifth article of war, I have the right, as a general officer commanding an army in the field, to convene a general court-martial. There are men in arrest for desertion and other crimes who should be tried.

Respectfully yours,  
H. H. Sibley,  
*Brigadier General, Commanding.*

**Sibley to Marshall. Camp Release, MN. October 13, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 275. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

Headquarters Military Expedition  
Camp Release, *Oct. 13, 1862.*

Lieut. Col. William R. Marshall,

SIR: I have placed you in command of an expedition principally to secure any Indians, with their families, who may be straggling about Lac qui Parle or between that point and the Coteau des Prairies. It may be necessary to visit the coteau, about 30 miles distant, and, if there is good reason to believe any Indian camp near, to do toward its southwestern limit, about 15 miles farther; but as it is not the intention to make a distant expedition, you will use a wise distraction, upon consultation with Major Brown, who accompanies you and not penetrate too far into the country from this camp. You can assure the Indians that it is not the purpose of the government to punish innocent persons, but they must surrender under discretion and come in under guard. You will of course prevent the men under your command from using any undue or unnecessary violence toward the Indians, should you take any of the latter, and especially do not permit any insult to the females.

I have directed the detachment to be furnished with six days' rations, although I do not expect you to be absent for so long a time. Reposing entire confidence in your judgment, I need hardly exhort you to exercise great vigilance and caution against surprise or ambush.

Very respectfully yours,

H. H. Sibley,

*Brigadier General, Commanding.*

**Pope to Halleck. St. Paul, MN. October 14, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 275. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

St. Paul, Minn. *Oct. 14, 1862. -11 a. m.*

Major General Halleck,

Have not heard from expedition to Yankton villages, Indians preparing for battle; from all appearances there will be a decisive fight—about 500 lodges of them.

Sibley has plenty of men and artillery. No fear of results.

Jno. Pope,

*Major General.*

**Stanton, Edwin M., Secretary of War, to Pope. Washington, D. C. October 14, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 276. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

War department,

Washington City, D. C. *Oct. 14, 1862—2:15 p. m.*

Major General Pope,  
*Commanding, St. Paul, Minn.:*

Your communication addressed to this department in relation to disarming the Indians and changing the policy of the government in regard to them, and your telegram to General Halleck on the same subject, have been submitted to the President, and are not under consideration by him. He instructs me to say that he desires you to employ your force in such manner as shall maintain the peace and secure the white inhabitants from Indian aggressions, and that upon the questions of policy presented by you his instructions will be given as soon as he shall obtain information from the Indian Department which he desires.

Edwin M. Stanton,  
*Secretary of War.*

**Sibley to Captain J. C. Whitney. Camp Release, MN. October 14, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2.* Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. p. 276. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

Headquarters Military Expedition  
Camp Release, *Oct. 14, 1862.*

Capt. J. C. Whitney,  
*Commanding Detachment at Yellow Medicine,*

SIR: I have received your dispatch of to-day with accompanying papers. Your proceeding, as I expected, in carrying out my orders was well taken and judicious, and I feel gratified that your success was so complete. In order to enable you to guard your prisoners perfectly for the few days required for preparation for their removal, I have ordered Captain Wilson's company, under the command of Lieutenant Parker, to proceed to-night to re-enforce you. He will report to you for orders, and I desire that you will keep a strong guard over the prisoners, so as to avoid any danger of the escape of any of them. They will have to be secured with irons around the leg two together, as I have done here; I have now 101 men fixed in that way, whom I shall send down shortly under a guard to join those you have in confinement, and then dispatch the whole to Fort Snelling. It is probable there are some innocent men among the prisoners in both camps, especially among your own; but it is impossible to winnow them out now, and they must all be taken down together.

The Indians, men, women, and children, must be principally fed on corn and potatoes, although I do not object to their receiving fresh beef twice a week when it can be obtained. Our own supplies are too scant to enable us to be very liberal on that score. You and Major Galbraith will please collect what trace-chains and suitable iron rods can be found, with a view to the extra security of the prisoners against escape. I have addressed an official communication to Major Galbraith of this date. You will forbid the men released from custody from straying away from the camp.

I am, captain, very respectfully,



H. H. Sibley,  
*Brigadier General, Commanding.*

Pope to Sibley. St. Paul, MN. October 17, 1862. *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M166, frame 653. \*

Headquarters Department of the Northwest  
Saint Paul, Minn., Oct., 17th 1862

Brig. Genl. H. H. Sibley.  
General:

I think the cavalry expedition will be sufficient to attend to the Sissetons at Big Stone Lake, and the Indians further East. The whole of the prisoners taken I wish brought down to South Bend or Mankato at your discretion. The trials to be finished there, and the executions to take place there also, so that all the Winnebagoes can be present to witness it. I have arrested Little Priest and eleven other Winnebagoes, who will be tried by the commission. As soon therefore as the cavalry expedition is off and you feel that every thing is in good train above Ridgley, I wish you would come down with a sufficient force to South Bend or Mankato, to reassemble the Military Commission or order another, and proceed with the trials the President directs that no executions be made without his sanction.

Respectfully Your Obdt. Servt.,  
(Signed) Jno. Pope,  
Maj. Genl. Comdg.

**Pope to Halleck. St. Paul, MN. October 27, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865, Volume 2*. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005. MHS Reading Room. Call number: E515. M66 2005. \***

St. Paul, Minn. Oct. 27, 1862. -10 p. m.

Major General Halleck,  
The river is very low, and from appearances will close by November 15...

Jno. Pope  
*Major General.*

**Watson, Charles H. to his father. Lower Agency, MN. November 5, 1862. *Charles H. Watson Letters*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P958. \***

Lower Agency Nov 5th, 1862

Dear Father I thought it best to write to you this afternoon because we are not a going to drill it is very windy The dust blows in clouds the prarie (sic) is kind of sandy and when the wind blows it is very disagreeable (sic) to be out side (sic) The Squass (sic) are going to leave here tomorrow to do below somewhere they are dealing out crackers to them there is one company and one piece (sic) of cannon went to the Fort to day (sic) and we are going tomorrow I think but we never know for certain until (sic) we are about ready to start so we don't know until we start . . .

**Williamson to Treat. Lower Sioux Agency, MN. November 5, 1862. *The Letters of John P. Williamson, in American Board of Comissions for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) Correspondance 1827-1878*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: BA10/.A512b. \***

J. P. Williamson to S. B. Treat  
[A. B. C. F. M. MSS. 310: No. 156—A. L. S.]

Lower Sioux Agency, Min Nov 5th 1862

Dear Bro. Treat,

I again am permitted to address you from my former mission Station. A sad change has come over everything since I left here more than two months ago. Our little meeting house only remains in ashes. The materials for a mission-dwelling-house which were all on the ground, and a considerable part of the work already done, are now either destroyed or in possession of our army. The stone cellar and some of the larger timbers only remain on the ground, and the board fence still remains around a small field which has been fenced. The same destructive hand has visited all the other habitations of the whites. The houses of the civilized Indians though not destroyed by themselves, have been brought into nearly as complete ruin by the scourges of our soldiers. The principal part of the Expedition against the Sioux under Gen. Sibley is now encamped at this place. They have under their charge the principal part of the Indians who formerly received their annuities here and at Yellow Medicine. Little Crow and the other Indian leaders however principally fled north before the surrender—some with and some without their families. The Indian men who have surrendered have all been tried by a Court of Inquiry appointed by Gen. Sibley from among his Officers. Three hundred and seventy are in chains—convicted of having taken part in the Indian war. There are probably not fifty other able bodied Indian men in the camp or in other words not more than fifty of those who came and delivered themselves up to Gen. Sibley because they were the most friendly have been cleared of the guilt of murdering the whites. Most of the members of the mission churches are here, with no charge against them. There are however exceptions. The only ones I know of are Robert Caske of the Pajutazee Church, Pierre Tapetatanka of the same church, and ----- Tahoh'pi-wakan received at Lac qui Parle. Not having arrived until after their cases were disposed of I do not know the exact testimony given in their cases. The only thing I have heard against the two last was that they were known to have been among those that attacked Capt Strouts company near Glencoe, which

they admit though they deny having taken part in the attack. Caske's case I have inquired more particularly into, as he was Elder in the Church at Pajutazee, one of the most active young Christian men, fathers nearest neighbor, whom we all loved most dearly, and who assisted father in his escape as a son. I am not satisfied with the trial which has been given him, though I might say the same of all the trials. The Court I understand say his case is a bad one. He acknowledges having been in several of the battles. The principal witness against him is one David Farribault (sic), a half breed who is an inveterate enemy of our religion, who testifies that during the siege of New Ulm he saw him and another Indian enter a house when he heard two guns go off, and afterwards heard them telling that they had there shot a white man, and another made this escape.

What will be done with all these convicted Indians is not known. The general opinion seems to be that they will all be hung. But before they are hung I understand the President must approve the sentence.

All these things make me sad—very sad. Such is the state of things that I do not consider it always safe or wise to give my opinion in regard to the treatment of many of these Indians. Perhaps it is not best for me to express it in writing, but I will say, I do not consider that any human court has the right to inflict personal punishment on any one for the sin of some of his race—hence I detest the avowed determination of perhaps a majority of the citizens of this state that they will never rest till the race is exterminated by war or sent to a hangmans or Napoleon's grave.

Without doubt those who are fairly convicted of murder should be sentenced to death. Butchering defenceless (sic) women and children is certainly murder. And I consider it immensely important that such should meet their just deserts. But even a murderer should have a fair trial—especially if he comes and delivers himself up for trial as all these have done. Now I must say that though I have no doubt that very many of these Indian prisoners are guilty of capital crime I do not feel satisfied with the way they are tried. 400 have been tried in less time than is general[ly] taken in our courts with the trial of a single murderer. Again, in very many of the cases a mans own testimony is the only evidence against him. He is first prejudged guilty of any charge of the Court choose to prefer against him and then if he denies he is cross examined with all the ingenuity of a modern lawyer to see if he cannot be detected in some error of statement. Then they are not allowed any counsel. They are scarcely allowed a word of explanation themselves, and knowing nothing of the manner of conducting trials if a mistake occurs they are unable to correct it. And often not understanding the English language in which the trial is conducted, they very imperfectly understand the evidence upon which they are convicted.

Again in a capital trial I think more notice should be taken of the trying position in which all the friendly disposed Indians were placed. They were told and it was firmly believed that befriending the whites was death—and everyone knows that there must have been quite a strong party at heart opposed to the proceedings, or the war would not have been brought to as favorable a close as it has, yet it seems almost impossible for any one to gain any credence for such deeds. I doubt if Parson Brownlow was an Indian whether he could make it believed by the majority here that he was a union man.

I will not weary your patience any farther by narrating what I consider some of the grievances to which these Indians—wicked, murderers though they may be—are subject.

On the other hand I am thankful that the Lord has inclined Gen. Sibley to do them as much justice as he has. The services of Mr Riggs in connection with the expedition have been

invaluable to the cause of justice and mercy. It has been in the heart of many to murder the Indians—men, women and children without discrimination. So far they have been restrained.

Nov. 6. Since writing the above I have learned that orders have been issued to convey all the Indians who have not been convicted to the neighborhood of Ft. Snelling. They will probably take up their march tomorrow. The men who have been convicted are to be taken to Mankato for what disposal is not made known.

It is a sad sight to see so many women and children marching off—not knowing whither they will ever see their husbands and fathers again.

You should have received from me a Report of my labors before this, but things have been in such an uncertain state that I could report little of myself, had I had the opportunity of writing.

When the outbreak occurred the prospects of this Station were more favorable than at any time during the year. At our last communion we received three members. Two of these were half-breed women who had not been active members for several years though formerly connected with one of our churches. The other was a Scotchman who had not been connected with any church for six or eight years. He was killed in the massacre at this place. His wife—Mrs. Alek. Hunter—was released among the captives and is not staying at my fathers in St. Peter. There were also several others considering the question of openly professing Christ. One man Wakanlidi-snan who desired to do so, but whose case was postponed on account of his conjugal relations, was one of the first men I met among the unconvicted Indians.

At the time of the massacre being in Ohio I wrote you a short note. Immediately after my return I spent my time assisting fathers family to fit up for the winter until the meeting of Synod about the last of September. I thought then of finding a place to preach to the Whites during the winter, as I saw no prospects of doing anything for the Indians. I spent some time in looking about for a location but had not settled myself when I heard that nearly all the Indians with whom I was acquainted were in camp, and I determined upon visiting them and I came here last week on Saturday which was the second anniversary of the commencement of my labors at this place. On the Sabbath I held service twice at the tent of Napexni the elder of the church at this place. It would not hold all who wished to attend, but it was the largest to be had. They were good meetings. Perplexed on every hand we committed our trust to God assured that he would have mercy upon us. They all say there is no religion but that of Jehovah. The conjurers and their gods though they ruled with fury for a time are now bound.

The future of these Indians looks dark and gloomy and they feel it in the highest degree. Much apparent advance towards civilization has been shown to be nothing, and many of their true friends now feel discouraged, and are not willing to make any more efforts to do them good. It is not so with me. I feel sad, and it grieves me to think that we see so little fruit of the labors for their good. Still there is some fruit. In heaven Christianity will here claim some of its trophies. And if some things have been done in vain, perhaps we may learn a lesson from the past, and in future shun the barren rocks. And who can say that God is not taking these Indians through a course of training in order to destroy their faith in idols, and open their hearts to the truth. Such is the opinion of many of our native members. Since visiting the Indians I am continually impressed with the conviction that it is not time now for us to cease Missionary labors for these Indians, and I am more desirous than ever to continue with them.

I shall remain with them during their march to Ft Snelling, and shall be glad to continue labors with them if my dwelling is only a tent for the winter. Had I located myself with the whites I would not have expected to be at any further expense to the Board for this year. As it is I

shall have nothing to live on but what I draw on you and as everything I had was destroyed except the suit of clothing I had on at the time, you may judge that I have not much to encumber me. And I shall not desire much for a time. Food and clothing and a half dozen books is all that I wish while I remain with a movable camp of Indians.

I had hoped that before this we should be able to have a meeting of the Dakota Mission review the past and confer as to what should be our future Mission-operations, but it has not seemed possible to get more than two of us together at one place.

I can make no estimate of my probable expenses for the coming year. You can judge as correctly as I. I shall try and be subject to your desires.

For the past year I do not myself know how much I have drawn. You can find it on the Treasurers books. On the present year I shall probably yet draw from one to two hundred dollars. For the dwelling house which I was building everything was on the ground and paid for—Sixty dollars more of work would have completed it. As I had not set up housekeeping, so much expense is saved, as everything would certainly have been destroyed, and it is doubtful whether any one could have escaped had they been there as there is no hiding places near.

We shall ever thank God for the mysteries of his Providence in leading us all at such a time to places of security. You will please excuse my dirty sheets—the dust flies through the camp like snow.

Your Obt Servant  
John P. Williamson

P.S When you write please direct to St Peter Min care of my father

J. P. W.

[Endorsed:] Rev. J.P. Williamson  
Lower Sioux Agency, Nov. 5, 1862.  
Rec'd Nov. 19.  
Ackgd to mission Dec. 1

**Pope to Ramsey. St. Paul, MN. November 6, 1862. "Letter of Gen. Pope to Gov. Ramsey." *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*. 14 November 1862. pg, 3, col. 3.<sup>74</sup>. \***

Letter of Gen. Pope to Gov. Ramsey.

Headquarters Dept. of the Northwest  
St. Paul, Minn. November 6, 1862

...(in the middle of the 3rd column)...

I have proposed to the Government to disarm and remove entirely from the State all the annuity Indians, and all other Indians now within its boundaries; to place them where they can no longer impede the progress of the settlements nor endanger the settlers; during the campaign of the next summer to seize and dispose of all the Indians upon whom we can lay our hands in like manner, so that the lines of travel and emigration shall be secure to the smallest parties; to treat

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<sup>74</sup> This is listed here as a letter although I found it published in a newspaper.

all Indians, as the late outrages and many precious outrages have demonstrated to be the only sage and humane method, as irresponsible persons, to occupy nearly the same relation to the Government as lunatics do to the State authorities; the Government to feed and clothe them cheaply, and for that purpose to use the annuities now paid them, and the proceeds of the sale of their reservations; to pay no more annuities, and give the Indian no more arms or weapons by which he can be dangerous.

By this mode of treatment, a great barrier, which has been constantly accumulating by the removal, periodically, of the Indian tribes, and their location along our borders, will be at once lifted away, and the whole region to the Rocky Mountains will, in a very short time, be opened to emigration, travel and settlement. By this policy, also, the Indian being deprived of his arms, and of the power of indulging his habits of wandering restlessness, and removed from the association of gamblers, whisky-sellers, and unprincipled white men and half-breeds, will be brought to a condition where Christianity and education can best be brought to bear upon him, and where some hope of success will be offered to the missionary and instructor in their humane labors.

Whatever the effect might be on the present generation of Indians, there is great reason to hope that the succeeding generation will be so far brought under the influence of education and civilization, that the Indian can safely be trusted among the whites.

In a humane view both to whites and Indians, and in view of the continued progress and prosperity of the State, this policy seems to me to be wise and conclusive of the whole question, and I shall spare no means to have it adopted by the Government and carried out.

The Sioux prisoners engaged in the late outbreaks will be executed unless the President forbids it, which, from the time of his dispatches, I am sure he will not do.

Very respectfully Governor,  
Your obedient servant,  
JOHN POPE.  
Major General Commanding.  
Gov. A. Ramsey, Minnesota.

**Riggs, Stephen R. to his daughter Martha. Camp Sibley, MN. November 11, 1862. *Stephen R. and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P727.**

Camp Sibley  
Nov 11 1862

My Dear Daughter Martha,

.....

The Indian trials are about through with but as yet I don't know what day we will start down. Wednesday or Thursday of this week has been talked of—but tomorrow is Wednesday and there is no preparation made yet. In fact we have not half teams enough—for it will require thirty-five wagons to take down the prisoners alone. Messengers have been dispatched down to New Ulm and Mankato for teams—so that there is really not much prospect of our starting before Friday or Saturday or even Monday. But I think we shall work our way down in the course of two days or two weeks. The order is that the Indian camp is to go to Fort Snelling and the prisoners to Mankato. I think Gen. Sibley will send me with the Indian camp but I am not yet sure of it....

**Hamlin, Jacob L. to his parents. Mankato, MN. November 12, 1862. *Hamlin Family Papers*. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: P1577. \***

Dear parents another move has brought us down here where we are to remain it is said until the Indians are disposed of I cannot tell in what way they will be punished but it is the general opinion of the officers and soldiers that they are to be hung a severe but deserved punishment there will be between 500 and 1000 squas (sic) and children deprived of the means of living and left homeless upon these barren and almost boundless prairies and unless the government provides for them they will certainly freeze and famish little did they think when at the silent hour of midnight they crept stealthily from house to house murdering helpless women and children robbing (sic) and burning houses or at the war dance they exhibited in wild delight the scalps of their unsuspecting victims and feasted upon their plunder that they were bringing upon themselves such terrible punishment but nothing which may be done to them will more than atone for their cruel deeds. The saddest tales of the sufferings of our frontier settlements have not been exaggerated in the least. On our way down as we passed New Ulm the people tried to kill the Indians with stones three were severely wounded and several others more slightly bruised it is a splendid country on the west side of the river below Fort Ridgely (sic) the land is level with an excellent (sic) soil and is above the reach of high water three rivers empty into the Minnesota between New Ulm and Mankato the two cotton woods and the Blue Earth we are camped at the mouth of the latter in a basin between two high bluffs with plenty of timber all around us it is a wild looking region right here at this place and the steep ragged hills look the most natural of anything I have seen in the west it is rumored that we are to winter here I hope so for it is the warmest place that I have seen Mankato is a one horse town which sprung up under the excitement of speculation one third of the houses are deserted and I should judge from appearances by the decent part of the people

I have received no letters for two weeks or more I expect to come home on a furlough sometime this fall if I get my pay I am still striving to live a Christian life and keep my promise pray for me.

Yours in love Jacob L Hamlin

**Pope to President Abraham Lincoln. St. Paul, MN. November 12, 1862. *Robert Todd Lincoln Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/-L738. \***

St. Paul

Hon A Lincoln Pres

Your dispatch of yesterday recd. Will comply with your wishes immediately. I desire to represent to you that the only distinction between the culprits is as to which of them murdered most peoples or violated most young girls all of them are guilty of these things in more or less degree. The people of this State most of whom had relations or connections thus barbarously murdered and brutally outraged are exasperated to the last degree and if the guilty are not all executed I think it nearly impossible to prevent the indiscriminate massacre of all the Indian's old men women and children. The soldiers guarding them are from this State and equally connected and equally incensed with the Citizens. It is to be noted that these horrible outrages

were not committed by wild Indians whose excuse might be found in ignorance and barbarism but by Indians who have for years been paid annuities by Govt. and who committed these horrible crimes upon peoples among whom they had lived for years in constant and intimate intercourse at whose houses they had slept and at whose tables they had been fed. There are fifteen hundred women and children and innocent old men prisoners besides these condemned and I fear that as soon as it is known that the criminals are not at once to be executed that there will be an indiscriminate massacre of the whole. The troops are entirely new and raw and are in full sympathy with the people on this subject. I will do the best I can but fear a terrible result. The poor women and young girls are distributed about among the towns bearing the mark of the horrible outrages committed upon them while daily there are funerals of those massacred men women and children whose bodies are being daily found. These things influence the public mind to a fearful degree and your action has been awaited with repressed impatience. I do not suggest any procedures to you but is certain that the criminals condemned ought in every view to be at once executed without exception. The effect of letting them off from punishment will be exceedingly bad upon all other Indians on the frontier as they will attribute it to fear and not to mercy. I should be glad if you would advise me by telegraph of your decision as the weather is growing very cold and immediate steps must be taken to put all in quarters.

John Pope

Maj Gen

**Watson, Charles H. to his father. Camp Lincoln, MN. November 14, 1862. *Charles H. Watson Letters*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P958. \***

Camp Lincoln Nov 14th 1862

Dear Father I thought it best to write you a few lines because I have not wrote to you for quite a while but then I never got no letters so I don't know when it is better for me to write letters I wrote Pat the day after we got here I got a letter from him the night we left Lower Agency We are camped about half way between South Bend and Mankato a mile and a half from each place I wrote to Clara yesterday I thought she would like to have a letter from me it is getting very cold for staing (sic) in these tents most of the boys have got bad colds we are going to stop up this way some where this winter we wil (sic) know to night we had a great time coming through New Ulm Sunday last it was the greatest Sunday I ever saw the women came out and threw stones at the indians and wounded a good many some of the women had knives some axes, some spades they wanted to kill them but we had so strong a guard that they could not do much it has ben (sic) a very wicked town they won't let Christian people live there but take and turn them out of town when they come there but they have suffered for it the town is nearly all burnt there is just a few houses in the thickest part of the town we did not come through town because we heard that they were going to kill the Indians they had barrels of hot water to throw on them to scauld (sic) them it was a gret (sic) Sunday we were marching all day was glad when we could get a minute to set down to rest I thought how nice it would be setting down in Meeting we came from the Lower Agency in two day and a half but we always started before daylight the last half day we came seventeen miles...



**Densmore, Benjamin to unknown recipient. Ft. Snelling, MN. November 17, 1862. *Benjamin Densmore and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/.D413.**

Our service on the frontier has been one of hardships and privations—of cold, hunger, and exposure. Today orders come for the regiment to march south soon as transportation can be had. Snow is on the ground and more offered. Winter is come and will soon close the rivers with ice. I presume Genl. Pope is anxious to get us away before the boats stop running below Lake Pepin—but I think “John will find it difficult to get the 3rd regiment off in a hurry”—The men are determined to have a furlough and I foresee trouble if Genl. Pope orders are carried out or if he attempts to have them carried out.

**Riggs, Stephen R. to President Lincoln. St. Anthony, MN. November 17, 1862. *Stephen R. and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P727.**

*(The Riggs papers contain a handwritten draft of this letter, not the actual letter sent to President Lincoln.)*

St. Anthony, Min.  
Nov. 17, 1862

To the President of the U. States  
His Excellency Abraham Lincoln  
My Dear Sir,

Permit me to address you in regard to the Dakota of Sioux Indians. For twenty five years I have labored among them as a missionary of the Am. Board. In the good providence of God, my own family and others were protected at the time of the late outbreak, and aided in our escape by Indians to whom we had preached the gospel. Since that time, for two months and a half past. I have been connected with General Sibley’s command as Chaplain of the Expedition. Acting in that capacity I have been permitted to pass through and take part in the glad scenes of the Expedition, viz. delivery (?) of the captive women and children, and the breaking of the whole war power. I have been very intimate with the sadder but no less necessary duties of the campaign—the trials of those who were guilty of participation in the murder and outrages committed on the Minnesota frontiers—and two days ago I brought (?) down by order of General Sibley the trials of these men before the Military Commission and delivered them to Gen. Pope in St. Paul, which same documents have been forwarded to you.

With this introduction of myself I trust I will be regarded as speaking humbly and with some knowledge of the facts. My long connection with this (sic) Indians, and personal acquaintance with many of those who are condemned, would naturally lead me to desire that no greater punishment should be inflicted upon them than is required by justice. But knowing the excited state of this part of the country—the indignation which is felt against the whole Indian people in consequence of these murders and outrages—this indignation being often unreasonable and wicked, venting itself on the innocent as well as on the guilty—knowing this I feel that a great necessity is upon us to excuse the great majority of those who have been condemned by the

Military Commission. This is required as a satisfaction to the demands of public justice. It is required also as a guaranty of safety to the women and children and the few men who in the great uprising proved themselves loyal to our government and people. Having said this, I may also say that I think there is room for the exercise of your clemency. Among those condemned there are various grades of guilt, from the man who butchered women and children to the man who simply followed with a party for the purpose of taking away spoils from the homes of settlers who had fled. There are too, cases of men who in the beginning of the outbreak, periled their lives to save white persons, and then by the force of the rebellion were drawn or forced into a somewhat criminal participation. To a few such cases I desire to draw your attention.

1. The case of Robert Hopkins, alias Chaskay dan (?). Although I wrote and two lists of the whole, I do not remember the number of this one. I think it is not far from 200—in the one side or the other. Appended to this you will find the affidavit of Mr. Andrew Flander—showing that Robert Hopkins saved Dr. Williamson and family and others. In the testimony of this case a witness states that he heard Robert Hopkins say he had killed one—witness understanding that it was a person while it was only a cow. This testimony was taken and recorded when the prisoner was not before the commission. I hope you will reprieve this man.

2nd. The case of Ta-pay-da-danka. I think his number is somewhere in ninety. His confession is that he started out on a war party and turned back. When it is understood that he went out with the hope of preventing this war-party from following on one trail, and murdering one party of forty persons, and that it did accomplish this purpose. He simply should not be hung.

3rd. The numbers 336, 337, and 338 are three men that according to the testimony were together all the time—none of them fired a gun or did anything worthy of death—one was acquitted because he was a half breed. The other two are condemned to be hung. Considering that these two men bore a very good character \_\_\_\_\_ (?). I would recommend them to mercy or at least that their sentence should be commuted.

This is all I have to say. Although it is horrible to think of executing so many men—yet I think with some exceptional ease—those I have mentioned among them—justice requires that it should be done.

Hoping that God will guide you in this as all other responsible duties devolving upon you. I remain

Yours very truly

S. R. Riggs

**Montgomery, Thomas to his parents and brothers. Mankato, MN. November 20, 1862.**  
***Thomas Montgomery Letters. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M235.***

We have here all the Indians who were captured and found guilty numbering about 400. They are all chained together by twos and confined in a long narrow shed in the form of a square and in the center of the campground. They are stowed together as close as they can sit and have little fires here and there among them. They are fed on crackers and in addition they have the care of a dozen of squaws who administer to their wants by giving them water and soup we made from the \_\_\_\_\_ (?) and bones of the cattle killed. These squaws and Indians present the most haggard specimens of humanity that I ever saw, dirty, filthy, and lazy. The squaws and 2 Indians who were not found guilty and some half breeds have six tipis in the camp to themselves. It is hard to

tell what will be done with these Indians yet. They are contracting disease in their close confinement and cannot stand it here in winter. Maybe we may have to march down with them to Fort Snelling yet. Probably they will not be executed here.

**Pope to President Abraham Lincoln, dated November 24, 1862. Robert Todd Lincoln papers. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/-L738.**

Hon. A. Lincoln, Pres.

Official information has reached me from the office in charge of the condemned Indians that organizations of inhabitants are being rapidly made with the purpose of massacring these Indians. \_\_\_\_ has been obliged in consequence to concentrate a considerable force for their protection and during the cold weather it is impracticable to protect as large a body of troops and Indians from the weather. I trust (sic) that your decision and order in the case will be transmitted as soon as practicable as humanity to both the troops and Indians require an immediate disposition of the case. I apprehend serious trouble with the people of this state who are much exasperated against the Indians.

John Pope  
Maj Gen

**Densmore to brother (first name of author is not clear). Red Wing, MN. November 27, 1862, written from Red Wing. *Benjamin Densmore and Family Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: A/.D413.**

There are a few squaws killed up at the Fort every week. Always cut their throats by running against a knife. The Third buries them in a hole, face downwards.

Four or five have suddenly died since they got down here, and the folks hope the third will stay up here and take care of them. It is thought they would be spared the trouble of living through the winter.

**Williamson to Treat. Lower Sioux Agency, MN. November 28, 1862. *The Letters of John P. Williamson, in American Board of Comissions for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) Correspondance 1827-1878*. MHS Manuscript Collection, Call number: BA10/.A512b. \***

J. P. Williamson to S. B. Treat  
[A. B. C. F. M. MSS. 310: No. 157—A. L. S.]

Ft Snelling Min. Nov 28, /62

Rev S. B. Treat  
My Dear Friend,

Some three weeks ago I wrote you from the Lower Sioux Agency giving you my report since the Indian outbreak. Did you receive the letter? I was afraid it would miscarry.

I accompanied the Indian camp from the Lower Agency to this place where we arrived a week ago last Thursday. We were under the escort of three companies of soldiers in charge of Lieut. Col. Marshall, who exerted himself to the utmost to assist and protect his helpless charge. Notwithstanding it was a camp composed almost wholly of women and children; the indignation of the people of Minnesota against all Indians is so great that had they been in charge of almost any other of our officers, I do not doubt that they would have been mobbed and many of them killed. As it was they performed the march with much fear, and notwithstanding the guard of soldiers, they received sundry salutations on the form of stones and sticks, to say nothing of the curses which were heaped upon them from the doorways and hillsides.

Since arriving here the Indians have been encamped in the river bottom in sight of Fort Snelling. A guard is placed all around the camp and no one is allowed to visit them without a pass from the Commander of the Post.

I have secured a boarding place about a mile from the camp, and am endeavoring to do what I can for their good. I think there never was a time when they so much needed the salvation of our Lord to save them from utter destruction; nor have I known a time when they appeared more ready to receive the Gospel. The power of the “medicine men” who were the leaders in the Indian war seems now broken. Their idols by the hundred have been broken, cast away and buried, as unable to protect them. The leading medicine men having either fled or been convicted the women and children and remnant of the men are left without a priest and without a god. The course of events however has more than ever convinced them of the reality of the supernatural. They are therefore superstitious—reverent. Those who have formerly been attendants upon our worship, of whom the majority are here, are more than usually desirous of continuing that worship. Others who have been before entirely indifferent now give silent but thoughtful attention. Temptation however comes in like a flood. A soldiers camp is a trying place for a Christian man trying for a virtuous woman. The devil through his emissaries is ever on the alert to bring our religion into disgrace by the fall of such. It is also a hard place to keep children. The children who were formerly in the boarding school are mostly in this camp, and their forlorn appearance makes me sad whenever I meet them. I have hoped that something could be done to keep them from losing what they had formerly learned of truth and virtue. Mr. Cunningham who is now at Minneapolis proposes opening the boarding school again in this neighborhood. I conceive it to be a subject of great importance to the Dakota Mission, and I had hoped that we should be able to be pursued in regard to the boarding school; but in our present scattered position it does not seem possible to have such a meeting. And I presume that all the members of the Mission have written to you on this subject.

That a place for these children to go to school is very much needed we all feel, but before a boarding school involving several thousand dollars of expense is started several questions are to be asked. How long will they remain in this place? Will it be long enough to justify the furnishing of a boarding house? Or in case the Indians are removed in the spring cannot the boarding school be continued some where in this vicinity? That they will be removed from here sometime in the spring is very certain. Where they will be taken to we cannot so well know. It will depend on the action of Congress and the Indian Department. There is no probability that they will again be allowed to settle anywhere in this State. The nearest place where they can be located out of this State is at Head of the Coteau in Dakota Territory. The place is about 80 miles, more or less, west from Lac qui Parle. The Indians who are acquainted there are very

anxious to be sent there as they say there is plenty of wood water and nice land to cultivate, with large prairies on every side so that the whites could not settle near them. I sincerely hope that they will be located there as I know of no other tract of land at all suitable, and if they are not allowed that spot they will probably be sent somewhere south toward Indian Territory which in the present state of our country if for no other reason would be undesirable. If they are located at the Head of the Coteau all the household furniture for the boarding house could be transported only from here and therefore would be no loss.

There is another plan which I have thought upon, and that is to have the Mission boarding school hereafter not among the Indians but among the Whites. I would purchase or rent a small piece of land in some moral neighborhood and erect what might be called a Manual labor Academy. The advantages of this plan you will easily see. It will but the children entirely off from the evil influences of Indian habits, and it will probably be less expensive. I think that it would also be well to receive no such small children as have been in times past. The necessities of the case are now somewhat changed. I hope hereafter that the smaller children can be schooled more at home The Indians will probably be more settled and live nearer together. Taking children 4 and 5 years old and keeping them till they are grown might be the surest way of making some good teachers and catechists, but with the same amount of making of means I think much more may be done for the tribe by selecting those of 12 and 15 years of age, who already begin to show some aptness for the work. Formerly this could not have been done, but I think now that it might. Those who have been in the boarding school have many of them arrived at that age now. Turn them away and you lose a great part of what they have gained. Keep them and instruct them now as they are just passing into the stage of manhood, and many of them will become worthy Christian men.

If the Board feel able to make the allowance I hope that the school might be continued in this neighborhood will it shall be permanently located here or transferred to where the Indians shall be settled.

I hope soon to have a day school started in the Indian camp.

Your humble Servant

John P. Williamson

P. O. Ft. Snelling Min

[Endorsed:] Rev. John P. Williamson

Fort Snelling Nov. 28. 1862.

Rec'd. Dec. 16.

Ackgd Dec. 19.

**Pickett, Eli K. to his wife. Mankato, MN. December 4 (9?), 1862. *Eli K. Pickett Correspondence*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1481. \***

My beloved wife. Although I dropped you a hasty line yesterday, not expecting to have an opportunity again for a number of days, yet events of so grave a character have since transpired that I cannot resist the desire I feel to advise you in regard to the facts, which are substantially as follows. First allow me to say that although I was sick yesterday at this time, I feel bully today as I began to feel considerable better I volunteered to take \_\_\_\_\_(care?) of the sick in the sick tents, a duty which I do not fancy very much but still I trust it was performed with a Christian spirit.

There was two men sick with mesles (sic), one of then the lonest and meanest man in the Camp—and the most bitter enemy I had, but I emptied the \_\_\_\_—fashion more than fifty times, and I handed him water gave him my hankerchief and waited on him right up to the handle, but I don't know that I can claim any credit for the act, for I could not help felling a sort of dark pleasure in the thought that I was heaping coals of fire upon his head for the bitterness with which he has ever pursued me since he came into the company. Well I was reading a story just at dark when Lant Cooffer (?) came in to spend the evening with me, and on going out after \_\_\_\_\_ I discovered an unusual bustle about the camp and then came the order fall out and prepare for action as this was an alarm (sic) that I had long prayed for, you may be assured I was not long in getting my straps on and bayonet fixed, but was finely (sic) ordered not to leave the tent, this thought it went rather Cropp \_\_\_\_\_ did not \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_ a good ready, not lesen (sic) my determination to be out when the fun commenced. By this time our Camp was all in arms, the cannons were leaded and placed in position and new companies of cavalry and infantry were continually arriving and this was a splendid sight to see then as they came winding round the hill, the horses in a sweeping gallop and the infn. an double quick, then after they had all got in and were forming in order for battle, the sight was still more lovely, the tramp of horses the marching and countermarching of long files of armed men the rustling of swords, the loud shouts of Command that was continually passing along the lines mingled with the sweet strains of martial music, and the glitter of steel in the clear moonlight, all confirmed to make it surpass in lovelyness (sic) and splendor anything I had ever beheld, but the night was very cold and after seeing the whole performance, I returned to my tent to await the alarm. Shortly I heard a most terable (sic) cry of distress and I was out of my tent in less than half the time that it takes me to \_\_\_\_\_ it, when I heard a man who seemed to be in the greatest agony near the line of sentinels at the reer (sic) of the camp, I was struck with the conviction at once that some one had tried to run the guard and had been stabled (sic) by the sentinel, I ran to the spot and found that he had been knocked down by an Irishman and stabled (sic) in the face and belly, the fellow was rooling (sic) in the snow and bleeding fiercely, just then I saw the wretch leave his tent and run for the woods, and myself and others were quicker than thought after him. he ran about 30 rods to the river and which he was contemplating the \_\_\_\_\_ of taking a cold bath I seized him by the \_\_\_\_\_ and brought him to about face and by that two other bony hands had him one on either side and I in front. I had fortunately seized him by the neck tie and by giveing (sic) it a little twist it backed up my knuckles and shut of (sic) his mind and so his gab, in this way we dragged him through the crowd to the guardhouse, I never felt so wicked before in my life and twas as much as I could do to keep from striking him in the face. The deep feeling of hatred which I have long felt \_\_\_\_\_ a drunken Irishman, and the bloody victim of his cruelty which I had just left rything (sic) in agony had so (aroused?) my combativeness that I could have killed him in an instant without a \_\_\_\_\_. And this ends the first scene in the drama. I had just returned to the tent once more when a new alarm was given and on looking out I discovered three or four horseman (sic) coming down the road it was soon discovered that they were scouts that had been sent out to watch the approach of the enimy (sic), their foaming steeds were panting for breath and the anxious riders soon communicated the expected news that a large body of Citizens were marching against us, to releive (sic) us of our prisoners \_\_\_\_\_ the red skins. My first business was to put on my straps and prepare to kill as many Indians as I could this I had resolved to do, in face and eyes of the oath I had taken to obey my officers and in this detirmination (sic) I was not alone, for nine tenths of the soldiers present (sic) had openly avowed their purpos (sic) never to fire on the Citizens but on the other hand to pitchin (?) to the Indians as soon as the hall was opened Still I

was aware that some of the old Country doeheads would do just as they were told so I expected to see some fun. Well it came for soon we discovered the dark lines of their advancing columns (sic) and soon the excitement which had almost died away was rekindled and and (sic) the shoulder strap gentry (they had almost split their throats (sic) in givein (sic) commands, that were as innocent (sic) of meaning as their heads of mere common sense or their hearts of courage), retired to a respectable (sic) or rather safe distance to the rear (sic) standing at least four inches less in their boots than when there were paradeing (sic) in from of their men and no danger was near. Col. Miller Commander of the post, now made a few remarks to the soldiers and ordered them to be ready to defend his most precious (sic) pets, to which I heard many reply they would see him dead (?) first he wound up by telling them that he would shoot the first man that refused to shoot the Citizen that dares to attack us, but the hour for talk and threats was now fast and the threatening crowd stood before us After surveying us a short time, and being assured of our determination (sic) not to give up the red skins they quietly retired to the mutual dissatisfaction (sic) of all parties interested except a few of our principle squaw loving officers and the Indians themselves and thus ended the program for the night....

**Montgomery, Thomas to his parents. Mankato, MN. December 7, 1862. *Thomas Montgomery Letters*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M235.**

We received word at 6 oclock at camp, that a multitude of citizens were coming to camp that night for the purpose of killing the Indians or taking them from us, which we took as an insult. Accordingly the Colonel sent messengers with dispatch to St. Peter for cavalry to Judson for the Company there they to Winnebago Agency for cavalry nearly all of which arrived before 11 oclock. The Colonel ordered every man to receive plenty cartridges to all load their guns and be ready by not undressing at a moments warning. He also sent scouts in horseback towards Mankato and South Bend to give notice of their approach. The word came about 11 oclock when all the Soldiers were called out and formed as skirmishers to receive them. I being unwell was left in care of our tents but could not help witnessing the scene. I saw them coming up to the number of 150, driven up by 25 cavalry who by a strategic movement surrounded them a short distance from camp. They came up unarmed except with clubs, axes, knives, hatchets, forks. The Colonel went up to them and talked a while and told them to go home as it was rather cold to be out—which they done with much chagrin. They were chiefly from St. Peter. We had the cannon loaded and we could have captured 2000 of them armed as they were. We had hard times while in camp standing guard every alternate night. I have only been on guard twice since I came here. . . . We are now quartered in Mankato. The Indians all were brought down yesterday and have quarters here. They still require a heavy guard. They will certainly be executed sometime in some way. Our Colonel said publicly that if the guilty of them were released by Govt. he would resign and notify the citizens to come after they passed the lines they might do as they pleased with them....

**Montgomery, Thomas to his parents. Mankato, MN. December 19, 1862. *Thomas Montgomery Letters*. MHS Microfilm Collection. Call number: M235.**

...I wrote before that I would probably come home about Christmas but I see no chance now if getting home till after New Years. This is owing to unforeseen events that have transpired since and which require the presence of all the soldiers here. By an order received by the Colonel night before last, 39 of the condemned Indian prisoners in our possession will be executed by hanging on next Friday, the 26th and for that reason he will allow no more furloughs to be granted till that tragical event transpires...

I just came off guard this morning. I was acting Sergeant yesterday. We had ourselves a very strong guard, 16 in each relief and today, as the papers stated that the Indians would be hung, we have 18 men in each relief. That with the officers makes a guard today of 62 men. The boys except very seldom have to go on duty every alternate day, and today, we of yesterdays guard were not permitted to discharge our pieces but promised only to hold ourselves in readiness for any disturbance, as a great number of citizens were expected to witness the ceremony. Yesterday my relief was ordered into the enclosure of about an acre surrounded by a board fence 8 or 10 feet high with two large gates for entrance as a guard over the Indians who were let out of their prison one third at a time so that it could be cleaned out. In the soft weather the water run through their prison is a small stream so that the straw that was cleaned out looked like what would come out of a cow stable, of which there was a number of wagon loads. They are a hard pitiable looking set as a whole, but there are some fine looking fellows among them. Two apparently white women were passed into the prison yesterday by Major Brown who proved to a mother of one and a sister of some of the Indians. The Mother wept and shook hands with 30 or 40 of them. They also brought a great bundle of clean clothes into them. All the squaws would shake hands and kiss this woman...

Several of the Indians are recognized by some in our company as the murderers of their parents or brothers or sisters and it is hard for them to stand in the prison as guard over them with guns in their hands and not revenge their death....I would like to see some of you up here next Friday, it will be a great day. There will be thousands in attendance from the whole country. Soldiers as well as citizens. They will be hung in the public street—20 at a time. It is a sure thing.

**Pickett, Eli K. to his wife. Mankato Minnesota. December 25, 1862. *Eli K. Pickett Correspondence*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1481. \***

...The great crowds that are constantly arriving plainly indicate the fact that to morrow (sic) is the fatal day for the execution (sic). The gallows (sic) is nearly completed and tis a large squair (sic) frame with a platform running around it which will be so adjusted that the whole thing will be suspended by one large rope drawn over a post in the center of the frame. The convicts will all stand upon this platform and the rope will be placed about their neck, then a given signal the big rope will be cut and the platform will drop leaving the culprits suspended in the air they will all 40 of them hang at once there will be slack enough in the rope about their necks to let them fall



sufficiently to break their neck we shall probably be in arms all day and perhaps all night I will enclose the order declaring martial law over the city...

**Pickett, Eli K. to his wife. Mankato Minnesota. December 26, 1862. *Eli K. Pickett Correspondence*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1481. \***

...We were in arms at eight oclock a.m. and soon the whole of main street was one soled (sic) mass of living (sic) human beings there was part of three rigements (sic) present under their respective officers and all of them under the Command of Colonel Miller of the Minnesota 7th. Our company was placed at the door of the prison together with the companies which made a narrow passage from the door to the gallos (sic)— They came out and some looking pale and sorrowful and some jumping and laughing some of them were striped with paint and some were painted intirely (sic) red, Some were gaily (sic) smoking a pipe or cigar while others were seemingly deeply affected with the awful scene through which they were about to pass—among the number I noticed two who held each other tenderly and almost convulsively by the hand they walked or rather run by twos through the lane to the scaffold and as they did so they commenced hooping and singing which most disagreeable nois (sic) they kept up until the fated cord was cut and the platform dropped from beneath then and they were left suspended between the heaven and the earth—there was 48 of them all told one of them broke his rope and came down but his neck was broken still he was hung up again—they were covered in a blanket and a white cap of coten (sic) cloth over their head which was drawn down over the case after the rope had been placed about their neck—they were followed to the scaffold by the Catholic priest who had been with them several days—they were left to hang nearly an hour and then taken down and loaded onto wagons and driven to the big grave and there ends chapter first...

**Hamlin, Jacob L. to “friends.” Mankato, Minnesota. December 27, 1862. *Hamlin Family Papers*. MHS Manuscripts Collection. Call number: P1577. \***

Dear friends we arrived at Mankato last wensday (sic) after a long tedious ride over the prairie road by the way of St. Marys and the Winnebago Agency Col Miller ordered us to remain here as our company was to be down the next day . . . Thursday the people commenced coming in from the country to see the execution of the indians Friday morning just at daylight the soldiers were marched out in front of the gallows and stood waiting further orders there were present about 2,000 infantry and 200 cavalry the soldiers were formed in a large square around the gallows to keep back the crowd Our Co with one or two more were formed in line from the prison to the gallows making a passage through which the indians were conducted to the scaffold when they came from the prison in sight of the scaffold they give their accustomed war whoop and walked boldly upon the platform holding their heads erect and a few even looked around upon the crowd with an exultant smile they danced upon the scaffold chanting their death song the officer (sic) fixed the rope around their necks and drew the white hoods over their eys (sic) for the rope and the drop fell and the 38 were launched into eternity. My finger has become so tired and week (sic) that I can hold my pen no longer so goodbye for a day or two.

J L Hamlin

**Watson, Charles H. to his father. Camp Pope, MN. June 12, 1863. *Charles H. Watson Letters*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P958.**

*(In a letter to his father written from Camp Pope on June 12, 1863, Charles "Herb" Watson writes in detail how many men had been assigned to carry what equipment.)*

There is eleven teams for to carry the pontoon bridges which I forgot to mention when I was telling how many were going to go.

**Jackson, Richard Mott letter to unknown recipient. October 10, 1903. "Rescue of White Girl Captives from Indians, An incident of the Minnesota Massacre in 1962." *John S. Marsh Military Papers*. MHS Manuscript Collection. Call number: P1369.**

...The soldiers were set to work chopping trees to build gallows, at which they worked with hearty good will. Sufficient timber was soon cut hewn and framed to hang the whole batch, the work was going bravely on when a halt was called, caused by the arrival of the General commanding, who upon becoming acquainted with our summary actions, ordered the proceedings and findings of the court martial to be forwarded to Washington for approval. This was received with much disgust by the men in the ranks, who had to guard and feed the big gang of undesirable boarders. After nearly 3 weeks of waiting orders came from Washington that the President approved the findings and sentences of the court in all cases where rape had been proven, in all others the prisoners were to be held for further orders. After careful sifting of the evidence only 40 could be found against whom rape had been specifically prove. It was a greivous (sic) disappointment, there was no possible doubt but that every one of the 480 were guilty of the crime and at the time of the trial it could have been proven. We had a lot of fine framing timber on hand for which there was no immediate use. One substantial frame was built about 20 feet square, on which it was designed to hang the 40, 10 on each side. Planks sufficiently high for the victims to walk under the nooses were held in position by kegs. Meanwhile the guards reported constant trouble with the prisoners, several had already been killed and more were being carried out daily. Unfortunately and probably by mistake two of the condemned 40 were killed. It was proposed to put in 2 substitutes, as there was plenty of material, but on the morning of the execution only 38 Indians reported for business. The remaining prisoners were under double guard, the troops disposed to prevent any possibility of escape of rescue. The 38 were led to their positions on the planks, their arms pinioned, the nooses tightened around their necks, they all singing their death song, the signal was given, the kegs knocked out, and all fell together. One big fellow, called "cut nose" broke his rope, he was quickly furnished with a new one and resumed his place. He was a thorough scoundrel, even for a Sioux, one of his performances was the murder of 5 women and 7 children whom he waylaid as they were in a wagon trying to escape, he climbed in and killed all with a hatchet. After hanging about an hour the bodies were placed in Army wagons and buried in huge pits previously prepared on the river bank. A long low log prison house was built for the remaining prisoners, stoves were placed in it to prevent freezing as cold weather came on. Notwithstanding the care given them that winter, the mortality was great, mumps measles and cracked heads seemed to be epidemic, some were carried out every day. Late the following Spring the survivors

were placed on a steamboat and taken down to the Mississippi thence down to the Missouri up which they were sent and turned loose again....

Private Jack  
R. M. Jackson  
3122 Page St.  
Phila. Pa.

## Transcribed Material: Newspapers

These sources are organized chronologically.

\*An asterisk after the citation indicates that a photocopy of this item is contained in the material accompanying the report.

### ***The Minnesota Pioneer. 12 August 1852. p. 2, col. 3. \****

The old Doctor arrived on Friday. She had only a slight detention, and that was upon the bar two miles below town. She had a good freight, for both landings and Mendota. She brought a mail, but no especial news. A dry time of the river seems to be a dearth of everything else. There is nothing by way of seaboard intelligence in the least refreshing, except the disturbance of our fishermen upon the North East coast. How much of a spray will be thrown up by way of correspondence between Mr. Webster and the British government is not yet shown to the public. It is probable however that the British government will think it best to keep very cool, for cotton wares are in demand at the present time and she needs raw cotton as much as she does codfish..

The Ben. Campbell steamboat company have just brought three like draught steamboats adapted to a low stage of water, and if they increase the small fry, by bringing in the Blackhawk and the Jenny Lind, as we have heard that they intend to do, we may see the lean kine devour up the fat kine, and the big boats become less.

The Black Hawk and the Jenny Lind [names of Steamboats], which for the few weeks last past, have been spawning up the Minnesota, last week struck for deeper water. They took down a considerable number of passengers and at increased rates. The Campbell company are a going to ask 37 ½ cents per cwt. from Galena. In this case a rain would be to them, no blessing.

### **“The Indian War—Removal of Troops.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record. 1 November 1862. p. 2. \****

#### **The Indian War—Removal of Troops**

Several weeks ago, we stated that Indian officials were secretly at work at Washington to prevent the removal of the Winnebago and other Indians from this State. If any doubt existed in the minds of our readers as to the truthfulness of that statement the fact that the War Department considers the war ended and has ordered the withdrawal of three regiments of soldiers from our State, is sufficient to remove all such doubts. Secretary Stanton has been made to believe that the Sioux have been conquered and the war ended, when in reality it has not barely commenced.

The strength of the Minnesota Sioux is estimated at 2,000 warriors. Gen. Sibley has only 400 prisoners. Where are the remaining 1,600 warriors? They are outlaws, driven from their reservation and roaming half-starved on the western prairie, waiting for a favorable opportunity—such as even the partial withdrawal of the troops would afford—to again attack our frontier, butcher our women and children, and plunder our granaries and farms.

In the whole history of the Indian war—save probably the fight at New Ulm—there has been nothing to destroy the belief among the Sioux of their superiority to the whites, and of their ability to retake their old hunting ground; and at that point their greatest loss was sustained. Owing to the want of a sufficient cavalry force, and a deficiency of supplies, Gen Sibley has been unable to pursue and properly punish the red devils, but has actually been forced to fall back, and the general result of the war has rather tended to encourage and embolden them.

In addition to the above, we have the positive knowledge that the Yancktons and Sissetons, two powerful bands, sympathize with and have actually joined the Lower Sioux in their war against the whites—all tending to show that the Indian war is no nearer a terminus than the crushing out of the Southern rebellion.

It is not safe for even half a dozen persons to restore north or west of St. Cloud, on the Upper Mississippi, or for farmers of the once prosperous and thickly-settled regions south and west of New Ulm, to return to their homes. While this danger continues, the war cannot and must not end; and this danger will continue so long as there is a remnant of the Sioux nation left to desecrate the soil of Minnesota.

We consider the withdrawal of even a portion of our troops, under the existing circumstances, a great outrage upon the people of Minnesota, and which, if it cannot be prevented by executive interference, should be promptly and earnestly protested against by our State authorities. If still persisted in, Gov. Ramsey should immediately call into the field a sufficient force of State troops, and a war of extermination should be waged against every tribe within our State limits. Nothing short of this will appease the people of Minnesota, or prevent the almost total depopulation of our frontier counties. With the withdrawal of troops, we know our country will lose largely if its farming population; which is an index of the condition of affairs in all the counties bordering on the Minnesota.

If the warning, in our issue several weeks ago had been heeded by our congressional delegation, we believe the forces operating against the Indians would not have been interfered with. Instead, however, Messrs. Wilkinson and Aldrich, continue to lounge in the drinking saloons of St. Paul and Mr. Wondom to engineer his re-election to Congress; while the important interests of our State are left to the mercy of a band of thieving Indian officials, whose interests can best be promoted by permanently fastening the Indians upon the people of Minnesota.

**“The Sioux War.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 1 November 1862. p. 1. \***

## THE SIOUX WAR

From Gen. Sibley

A dispatch from Gen. Sibley to Col. Montgomery, dated the 25th, says that his entire command, excepting five companies, had returned to the Lower Sioux Agency, where the Military Commissioners will commence the trial of the Indian prisoners, numbering on all over four hundred. The Winnebago prisoners are to be taken to the same place for trial, but will be retained here until they are wanted.

From the above, we judge that the active operations are to be suspended for the winter, and after the trial and execution of the guilty, the troops will go into winter quarters.

**“Prisoner’s Coming.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 1 November 1862. p. 1. \***

#### PRISONERS COMING

We learn that General Sibley, with the main portion of his force and over four hundred Indian prisoners is on his way to this place, where the military commissions will try the prisoners, and the guilty be punished. Doubtless a large force will be wintered in this vicinity.

Gen. Sibley’s command is expected to arrive here to day or tomorrow.

**“A Word from Col. Marshall.” *Saint Paul Daily Press*. 8 November 1862. pg. 1, col. 3. \***

#### A WORD FROM COL. MARSHALL

We have been shown a private letter from Lieut. Col. Marshall, in which, after referring to the fact that Gen. Sibley has intrusted him with the removal to Fort Snelling of those Indians who have been declared, by court martial, to be either friendly or guiltless of the late massacre, with a considerable body of women and children. He earnestly deprecates any molestation by inhabitants of the Minnesota Valley. Reports of threats to this effect have reached him, and we urge his appeal that no attempt will be made to execute them. Col. Marshall will have 300 troops under his command for the protection of his train. On this subject he adds:

I would risk my life for the protection of these helpless beings, and would feel everlastingly disgraced if any evil befell them while in my charge. Through the Press, I want the settlers to know that they are not the *guilty Indians* (some 300 of whom are to be executed at South Bend) but *friendly Indians, women and children*.

The people of the Minnesota Valley have too distinct a recollection of Col. Marshall’s services in the Indian campaign not to respect his wishes as above expressed.

**“News from Sibley’s Camp.” *Saint Paul Daily Press*. 8 November 1862. pg. 1, col. 3. \***

#### News from Sibley’s Camp.

Lieut. W. H. Shelley arrived at headquarters early yesterday morning, making the journey from Red Wood to this city in twenty-two hours. Lieut. S. brought down dispatched announcing the result of the recent trials before the military commissioners instituted by Gen. Sibley. Of the three hundred and ninety-two Indians tried before that court, seventy were acquitted, eighteen condemned to imprisonment, and three hundred and four to be hung. The names of the condemned were yesterday transmitted by telegraph by Gen. Pope to the President for his approval of the respective sentences.

The whole command of Gen. Sibley were to commence this morning to move down to South Bend with all the condemned prisoners in charge.

All the women and children and “good Indians” were to be brought down to Fort Snelling by an expedition of Lieut. Col. Marshall, and accompanied by Major Galbraith.

**“Sibley Coming.” *Mankato Semi WeeklyRecord*. 8 November 1862. p. 2. col. 1. \***

#### SIBLEY COMING

On Tuesday afternoon Lieut. Geo. A. McLeod, of Gen Sibley's staff, arrived here, bringing positive intelligence that the forces under command of that officer were ordered to move to this place. Lieut. McLeod and the officers of this department have selected a camping ground, near Sibley's mound, at the mouth of the Blue Earth—a suitable and appropriate place. Col. Montgomery has ordered the erection of suitable quarters and is busy making all necessary arrangements for the accommodation of Gen. Sibley and his large force.

On Wednesday morning, about twenty-five or thirty teams were sent to meet Gen. Sibley, to assist in transporting his camp equipage, provisions, etc.

We learn that the military commission has completed the trials of the Indian prisoners, and only one has been acquitted. The guilty number about 400.

**“Gen. Sibley.” *Mankato Semi WeeklyRecord*. November 8, 1862. p. 2. col. 1. \***

#### GEN. SIBLEY

The force and prisoners under Gen. Sibley are now en route for this place, and are expected to arrive on Monday next. Our understanding is, that offensive operations against the Indians are closed for this fall, and that a portion of the troops will go into winter quarters—two regiments being ordered south.

Considering the many and serious disadvantages under which Gen. Sibley has labored—a deficiency of arms and ammunition, scarcity of provisions, and the total absence of cavalry at a time when he could have successfully pursued and captured Little Crow and his followers—the expedition has been successful beyond the most sanguine anticipations. Upwards of three hundred white captives in the hands of the Indians at the commencement of the war—all, or nearly all have been retaken and returned to their friends. Much private property has been secured; and some fifteen hundred Indians, engaged directly or indirectly in the massacres, have been captured, and those who have actually stained their hands in the blood of our frontier settlers, are condemned to suffer death. Their sentence will be carried into execution, unless countermanded by authorities at Washington.

Gen. Sibley, at the onset, marked out his plan of campaign and though censured by an impatient people and press, he did not swerve from his course, confident that the result would vindicate the wisdom of his policy. Every dispassionate man must admit that events have fully justified his expectations, and that no other policy, under existing circumstances, could have been equally successful.

In his campaign against the Sioux, Gen. Sibley has demonstrated more than ordinary military ability, and which has won him the confidence and respect of both officers and men under his command. He alone deserves the praise for the success of the expedition, and we but speak the sentiments of a gratified people, when we express the wish that he may continue in the service to conduct the offensive operations against the hordes of hostile savages, gathering on our western prairies, to assail with renewed fury in the spring, our frontier posts and settlements.

**“The Sioux War.” *Mankato Semi Weekly Record*. November 8, 1862. p. 1. \***

## THE SIOUX WAR

Expedition to Lake Shetek.

The expedition sent out to bury dead at Lake Shetek, returned on Tuesday evening. From Mr. C. D. Hatch, who accompanied the expedition, we have learned the following.

The detachment consisted of thirty men, under command of Lieut. Foot of company F, 25th Wisconsin. The first day out from New Ulm, they stopped at Leavenworth. Found the settlement deserted, excepting one family. The furniture and clothing were generally removed from the houses or destroyed. A few soldiers went to visit a family residing there, who mistaking them for Indians had attacked them, and plundered and destroyed their property. The soldiers wrote their names on the door of the house and explained the object of their visit.

The expedition camped ten miles beyond, at the farm of two bachelor brothers named Burns, who had remained at home, unmolested, during the most of the excitement. They said they had killed an Indian, about three weeks before, on the upper Cottonwood.

Next night, about nine o'clock, they arrived at Lake Shetek, and stopped at Mr. Wright's house, where they found plenty of hay and grain. Next morning started for the battle ground, where they found skeletons of nine persons—Mrs. Everett, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Ireland and two children, Mr. Eastlick and boy; and two of Mr. Duly's boys.

Nothing remained of the bodies but the skeletons, and the persons were identified by the size of their forms and their teeth...

**“The Sioux at Fort Snelling.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862. pg. 4, col. 1. \***

THE SIOUX AT FORT SNELLING—Lieut. Colonel Marshall is expected down to Fort Snelling to-day, with twelve or fifteen hundred Indians, principally women and children, who are to be quartered there until the intentions of the Government respecting them shall have been made known. They have marched all the way from Red Wood, via Fort Ridgley and Henderson. At Henderson, we understand, quite a good deal of ill feeling was manifested against a half-breed who had been tried by the Commission and cleared—the populace deeming him as guilty as those condemned, were with difficulty restrained from executing summary vengeance.

Col. Marshall has three companies of soldiers under him, escorting the Indians—Capt. McLarty's Fillmore county company, Capt. Ed. (sic) Folsom's Stillwater company, and one other.

**“The Condemned Indians.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 13 November 1862. pg. 4, col. 1. \***

THE CONDEMNED INDIANS—We learn that Gen. Sibley has already reached South Bend, the place designated to rendezvous the troops under his command. He has in his charge the 303 Indians condemned to be hung, the 18 condemned to imprisonment, besides about fifty squaws retained to cook for the Indians. As the train passed through New Ulm, the sight of these



miscreants exasperated the people highly. They turned out en masse, and pelted them with stones and sticks till they got clear through the town. One woman, watching her chance, darted between a file of soldiers, and knocked down one of the Indians with a club.

**“Attack on the Condemned Indians at New Ulm.” *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. 13 November 1862. p, 4, col. 1. \***

#### ATTACK ON THE CONDEMNED INDIANS AT NEW ULM

When Gen. Sibley was moving from the Lower Agency to South Bend, with the condemned Indians, the rumor was current at New Ulm that the Indians would not be executed, and a serious attack was made upon them with clubs and stones by the women and children of that place. One Indian had his jaw broken, and several others were severely injured. The women were quite determined in their attack, and the soldiers had considerable trouble in repelling their assaults on the savages. The Indians were chained, and comparatively helpless.

**“Letter of Gen. Pope to Gov. Ramsey.” *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*. 14 November 1862. pg, 3, col. 3.**

Letter of Gen. Pope to Gov. Ramsey.

Headquarters Dept. of the Northwest  
St. Paul, Minn. November 6, 1862

...(in the middle of the 3rd column)...

I have proposed to the Government to disarm and remove entirely from the State all the annuity Indians, and all other Indians now within its boundaries; to place them where they can no longer impede the progress of the settlements nor endanger the settlers; during the campaign of the next summer to seize and dispose of all the Indians upon whom we can lay our hands in like manner, so that the lines of travel and emigration shall be secure to the smallest parties; to treat all Indians, as the late outrages and many precious outrages have demonstrated to be the only sage and humane method, as irresponsible persons, to occupy nearly the same relation to the Government as lunatics do to the State authorities; the Government to feed and clothe them cheaply, and for that purpose to use the annuities now paid them, and the proceeds of the sale of their reservations; to pay no more annuities, and give the Indian no more arms or weapons by which he can be dangerous.

By this mode of treatment, a great barrier, which has been constantly accumulating by the removal, periodically, of the Indian tribes, and their location along our borders, will be at once lifted away, and the whole region to the Rocky Mountains will, in a very short time, be opened to emigration, travel and settlement. By this policy, also, the Indian being deprived of his arms, and of the power of indulging his habits of wandering restlessness, and removed from the association of gamblers, whisky-sellers, and unprincipled white men and half-breeds, will be brought to a condition where Christianity and education can best be brought to bear upon him, and where some hope of success will be offered to the missionary and instructor in their humane labors.

Whatever the effect might be on the present generation of Indians, there is great reason to hope that the succeeding generation will be so far brought under the influence of education and civilization, that the Indian can safely be trusted among the whites.

In a humane view both to whites and Indians, and in view of the continued progress and prosperity of the State, this policy seems to me to be wise and conclusive of the whole question, and I shall spare no means to have it adopted by the Government and carried out.

The Sioux prisoners engaged in the late outbreaks will be executed unless the President forbids it, which, from the time of his dispatches, I am sure he will not do.

Very respectfully Governor,  
Your obedient servant,  
JOHN POPE.  
Major General Commanding.  
Gov. A. Ramsey, Minnesota.

**“The Indian Expedition.” *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer and Democrat*. 14 November 1862. pg, 2, col. 3. \***

The Indian Expedition  
Letter from Gen. Sibley’s Camp

Camp Sibley, Red Wood Agency, November 14, 1862

To the Editor of the Pioneer.

We have now the most comfortable camping grounds that have fallen to our lot during the campaign. We are located on a high prairie, close to the Minnesota river, and wood and water are easily obtained.

The ferry has been put in running order and thereby furnishes an easy transit across the river for foraging parties, and to those going to Fort Ridgely. When we came up, we were obliged to cross at the Fort, which made the journey several miles longer. A number of buildings have been left by the savages, and these are occupied for various purposes. Other buildings have been constructed for hospital purposes and officers. There is plenty of lumber, and if more was wanting, there is a saw mill which could easily be put in running order, and furnish a fresh supply. Stoves in abundance have been obtained and protrude their blackened pipes from the tent tops. For those who like fire places, convenient bricks are at hand, for their construction. Col. Crooks has had one of these constructed for his tent, and the blazing brands remind one of home, and suggest gay, hilarious times.

Men will make themselves comfortable in camp. If logs are not to be found, they build houses from sods, and dig holes in the ground, as some of our men did at Camp Relief.

We are still finding victims of the massacre. A foraging party was out day before yesterday on the other side of the river, and twelve miles above here, found the remains of twelve persons. In one house a skull lay upon the bed, and in the same room was a dead hog, who had probably been feeding on the remains. Around the premises were a couple of dogs. How horrible the thought of these animals preying on the bodies. This party went out again to-day, and a short distance above the same place found the remains of thirteen more bodies. One

skeleton was evidently that of a very strong, powerful man. His skull was fractured into bits. Cattle were running around almost as wild as the buffalo.

An ox was lying on the ground writhing in agony, and frothing at the mouth. The men shot him, thinking that he had hydrophobia. Many of the dogs are said to have gone mad. Desolation reigned supreme. It would not have been well for a “lo” to have made his appearance on that scene of their human butchery.

If a flag of truce had been raised, they would have wrought into the flag, without troubling its bearers with the burden.

Henceforth, for many a year, I have no doubt that on our borders Indian hunters will be found who will emulate those of whom the early history of our country tells, bent on war to the death with the savage tribes.

Men whose wives and children have been brutally murdered and mutilated, and homes desolated forever, will never rest till blood has answered for blood—God’s fierce avengers in the future. Success to their unerring trifles!

It is supposed that there are many other bodies still lying unburied above Beaver Creek. Antoine Frenier, on his way down from Yellow Medicine to the Fort at the commencement of the attack, while the battle at the Fort was raging, saw twenty-seven bodies, that he thinks have not yet been buried.

He went into a house to find a match to light his pipe. There he saw several little children, the eldest not over eight years old—Germans. One of them, a girl, was wounded in the hand. They appeared to be stupid and unconscious of their condition. He asked one where her mother was, and she pointed him in the direction. He went out of the house, and, passing down a little path, found, closely grouped together, twenty-seven dead bodies! The only living creature there, was a little child on the breast of its mother, vainly seeking for nourishment! Being alone, and beset by savages, he had to leave them to their fate—starvation.

The Indian Camp, containing several thousand souls, and composed principally of women and children, is pitched close to ours. Nearly in the centre of it stands the blackened walls of a church, which charitable and pious hands built for their edification, but which they ruthlessly destroyed...

**“The Indians at the Fort.” *The Saint Paul Daily Press*. 14 November 1862. pg. 4, col. 1. \***

THE INDIANS AT THE FORT—Lieut. Col. Marshall, with his long train of Indian women and children, half-breeds and “good Indians,” arrived at the Fort yesterday. There are some forty or fifty full-blooded adult male Indians, and one or two hundred half-breeds, who are proved guiltless of the late atrocities. The rest are women and children; and in all, number over eighteen hundred persons. They marched all the way from Red Wood since Friday last, attended by three companies of soldiers, the train being three or four miles in length. They are now encamped on the bluff, about a mile above the Fort buildings, in the direction of Shakopee. The only chief of much importance with them is Wabashaw. Red Iron did not come down, but will be with them soon. Those staunch friends of the whites—Other Day and Taopi—are with them. We are also gratified to state that Old Betsey, so well known in this city, has during all the troubles been the most steadfast friend of the whites; and it is her boast that none of her relations are among the guilty. Her son and two nephews are in the camp above the Fort.

**“Military.” *The Saint Paul Pioneer Press*. 14 November 1862. pg. 1, col. 4. \***

Military—The Marshall Guards, Capt. Rockwood, arrived at Fort Snelling yesterday morning, from Mankato, having made the march in a little less than two days, which would be equal to a little over thirty miles a day. Such marching is hard to beat, and is scarcely ever done, even in a retreat. The officers and men, we are glad to state, are all in good health and spirits. The probability is that this company will remain at Fort Snelling all winter, but, if not, at Fort Ripley, the Head-Quarters of the Regiment.

Lieut. Col. Wm. R. Marshall with a force of three hundred soldiers, arrived at Fort Snelling last evening, with eighteen hundred Indians, only forty of whom are men, the balance are women and children. The Colonel arrived in the city last evening, looking well.

**“The Train Attacked at New Ulm.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. pg. 1-2. \***

#### THE TRAIN ATTACKED AT NEW ULM

Before reaching New Ulm Gen. Sibley was notified of the exasperated state of public opinion in that place, and that his prisoners would probably be attacked in passing through the town. He therefore avoided the place as far as possible, but the infuriated populace—men, women and children—anticipated his object, and made preparations accordingly. Large piles of stones were collected along the road, and as the train came up, the people attacked the Indians with clubs, knives, stones and guns. The skull of one was badly fractured; another received a severe blow on the hand, while a number of others were slightly injured. Fortunately, no shots were fired, and in this regard, the mob showed great discretion. The troops endeavored to quell the mob, and protect the prisoners. A number of the rioters were arrested, but subsequently released. While we sympathize with the people of New Ulm in their sufferings, we cannot but condemn as unjustifiable their conduct in thus attacking prisoners strongly ironed and guarded, and all under sentence to atone with their lives for their misdeeds.

**“The Ringleaders to be Hung.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. pg. 2, col. 3. \***

#### THE RINGLEADERS TO BE HUNG.

A telegraphic dispatch in the Winona Republican, of the 12th, says that the President has replied to Gen. Pope to hand only the ringleaders in the Sioux massacre, and requiring a copy of the evidence upon which they were convicted. We are at a loss to understand who the President refers to as “ringleaders” unless he means Little Crow and a few other chiefs, and if so, we would remind him that those personages must be caught before they can be hung.

From the above we infer that few, if any of the Indians now held by Gen. Sibley will be hung with the sanction of the Government. Few of them were “ringleaders” but all were actual participants in the murders. The massacre was premeditated and simultaneous by the whole Sioux tribe; and it must indeed be a nice discrimination that can distinguish the “ringleaders”

from the followers. All are alike murderers, and no punishment short of hanging will satisfy the citizens of Minnesota. If the Government will not execute them, the people must, and woe to the men or set of men who interpose between the people and the savage murderers.

**“The Indian Prisoners.” *Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. pg. 2, col. 2. \***

#### THE INDIAN PRISONERS.

A great deal of indignation has been caused throughout Minnesota, by the announcement that the Government at Washington is making an effort to secure a permanent peace with the Sioux, without hanging the prisoners now held by Gen. Sibley. In some towns indignation meetings have been held, and in a few instances organizations have been effected for the purpose of rescuing the prisoners from the military authorities, and visiting summary punishment upon them. Our people have been shamefully wronged and outraged by these savage devils, and nothing but their deaths will atone for the lives of our murdered citizens. They have been fairly and impartially tried and condemned, and the people of Minnesota demand that they shall suffer death.

The people have been suspicious for some time that the congressional delegation and the Indian officials of our State, were executing an influence at Washington to prevent this result, and we believe their efforts have been at least partially successful; and that the telegraphic announcement above referred to has been sent here to test the temper of our people and see whether such an outrage can be perpetrated with impunity. If they think it will be tamely submitted to, they much mistake the temper of the people, and an attempt to carry it into effect will so infuriate the citizens of Minnesota, that they will arise as one man and drive every Indian, agent and trader from our borders. The people have been trifled with too long already, and we beseech the officials at Washington, of they would save our State from the disgrace of an open revolt and resistance to the military authorities, that they allow the law to take its course, and full justice be meted out to the savage murderers of our neighbors and friends.

***Mankato Semi-Weekly Record*. 15 November 1862. p. 3, col. 3. \***

Lieut. Col. Marshall passed down a few days ago, with fifteen hundred squaws, children, and “friendly Indians.”

**“The Punishment of the Indians.” *St. Peter Tribune*. 15 November 1862. pg. 1, col. 2. \***

#### The Punishment of the Indians.

A brief dispatch has been telegraphed from Washington, announcing the objections of the President to the application of Capital punishment to the monsters who have laid waste thriving and happy settlements upon our frontier, and destroyed life without regard to age, sex or condition. We can hardly believe it possible that any sane man can hesitate for a moment in deciding upon full and deadly punishment upon those who have perpetrated the most horrid and

revolting murders ever recorded in any history. We had supposed that governments were organized with a view of benefiting and protecting the governed, at least to a certain extent, but the brief announcement transmitted a few days ago and published in the journals of the west, seem to prove this an empty theory, without foundation in existing facts. Our people may be butchered in all the horrid forms of butchery, and a kind, honest President, halts upon the limits of conviction, satisfied that a simple trial is abundant retribution for tearing the beating hearts from the bodies of our people, for hacking off the quivering flesh of womanhood, and sinking the bloodstained tomahawk into the brains of innocent children.

Has the Administration become so accustomed to a *lenient* policy in its treatment of enemies that it forgets even simple protection to its friends? Has murder become a virtue, when committed upon patriotic and happy communities—a virtue which the President of these United States encourages in this last exhibition of criminal mercy, and continuation of a rotten and worthless “policy.”

The crushing out of a rebellion has been entrusted to men who demonstrate the ease with which a “Fabian policy” may be a humbug, and what flabby, unsound meat may be encased within the mixed skin of the anaconda. The people of Minnesota have an enemy peculiarly their own, to whom the tactics of the past eighteen months will be application without beneficial results. We must furnish to these barbarians a vengeance which will be at once swift terrible and just, or the peace and security of Minnesota is every moment endangered. We deal with an enemy incapable of feeling any of the kind impulses of humanity when once maddened with the highest authority in the land timorously says no capital punishment must be applied to these specimens of the devil’s power of creation.

Our prairies are reddened with the blood of many whose bare lives are worth more than every red brute that has escaped capture or the bullet. The people cannot think of the nameless graves dotting our frontier, or the yet unburied bones lying thereon, without crying out for retaliation, and it will be obtained though misguided Presidents oppose punishment.

Every man in Minnesota and particularly the many who have lost wives, children, or other relations during the most unheralded and awful of massacres, will regret this inexplicable order of President Lincoln’s, while endeavoring to reason out some excuse for that which comes to us a curse though sanctioned by executive authority.

The President can rest assured that the doom of our Indians is sealed though the clemency may object to the manner of its execution, for men will forget sentiment with the sickening odor from the decaying bodies of murdered relatives is still detected in secluded places where death by Indian hands has overtaken them.

Every civilized government on the globe punishes outrages upon its subjects, and we shall yet see whether ours will dare do less! While hoping the President will not interfere with the operations of justice to these savages, who have only the shrieks of murdered citizens and the light of desolated homes to speak in their behalf, we add another warning of the consequences of such interference.

**“Making Preparations.” *St. Peter Tribune*. 15 November 1862. pg. 2, col. 2. \***

Making Preparations—We are told that the people of Mankato are digging pits for the reception of the Indian carcasses, after the savage spirit has been departed. We sincerely hope these holes will not long remain hungry for proper occupants.

**“Stoned.” *St. Peter Tribune*. 15 November 1862. p. 2, col. 2-3. \***

STONED—When General Sibley passed New Ulm with the Indian prisoners, the people were removing the bodies of some of those who had been massacred, or killed during the battle. A number of women who had suffered loss of relatives during the massacre, became so enraged that they commenced a furious assault upon the murderers, with stones, clubs, and other irregular weapons. Four or five of the Indians were considerably damaged. Pity the blows were not given with greater force.

**“From the Indian Region.” *Faribault Central Republican*. 19 November 1862. p. 2, col. 6. \***

FROM THE INDIAN REGION—Sergeant Gardner, of Capt. Grant’s company, Sixth Regiment, arrived in this city last evening. He brings news of quite a scene at New Ulm, as the condemned Indians were being brought down from the Lower Agency to South Bend. Gen. Sibley was informed, before reaching the town, that the people were preparing to give the ‘pagans’ a warm reception, and as a precautionary measure marched a little out of the way to avoid difficulty. New Ulm was not to be cheated out of a little revenge, however, and the men and women came out in force, the men armed with guns, and the women with aprons full of stones. No very serious damage was done, a few, only, of the red skins receiving cuts and smashes about the head at the hands of incensed women.

The people were assured that the Indians would be executed, and relying on this assurance, allowed them to pass with no more severe treatment than the addition of a few more ‘sore heads’ to the train.

From this outbreak, the feeling that exists among the outraged citizens of Minnesota, is apparent. Nothing but the firm belief that the Indians will be hung decently and in good order, accounts for the fact that these three hundred convicted Sioux breathe the breath of life at the present time.

**“The Indian Expedition.” *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*. 21 November 1862. pg. 3, col. 4. \***

*(The following letter was written on November 7, 1862, and published on November 21, 1862.)*

The Indian Expedition.

Letter from Gen. Sibley’s Camp.

Interesting Account of the Indian Trials.

Camp Sibley, Lower Agency

Nov. 7th, 1862

...The Indian women and a few innocent males, numbering about 1,500 in all, broke camp and left for Fort Snelling this morning under charge of that brave and gentlemanly officer Lieutenant Colonel Marshall....We start early in the morning for South Bend, homeward bound. –H. (This is the only reference to an author. It probably refers to Isaac Heard.)

**“Local Affairs.” *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat*. 21 November 1862. pg. 8, col 1. \***

#### LOCAL AFFAIRS

Accident—An Indian squaw was accidentally shot yesterday at Fort Snelling by one of a number of soldiers who were practicing at target shooting. We doubt not that there will be a great many such accidents if Abraham doesn't consent to let them swing.

**“Memorial.” *St. Peter Tribune*. 8 December, 1862. p. 1 col. 3. \***

#### Memorial

*To the President of the United States:*

We, the Citizens of Nicollet County, in the State of Minnesota, respectfully represent that it is reported that many, if not all of the Sioux Indian criminals, not captive in this State, after having been convicted by a lawful and able court, of the perpetration of the most abhorrent and unpardonable crimes, are about to be dismissed by the United States Government, without due punishment, and permitted, with their tribes, to reoccupy their reservations and re-possess their former privileges.

The report is incredible, yet too current and universal to be without significance, and far too alarming and unnatural not to arrest our profound attention, coming as it does, while the blood of white settlers is yet red upon a hundred hearth-stones; while we are still gathering up the bones of our murdered relatives and friends, and while we are yet in the very depths of our sorrows and disasters. It outrages our feelings, mocks at our condition and moves within our minds the greatest apprehensions.

We therefore earnestly request—nay, more—we rightfully demand, that this report be contradicted, and confidence and hope restored by the prompt action of the Government, in punishing the guilty, and removing all other Indians from our borders. We have not come into the West to be their recognized prey, and we will not believe that the people and the property of a large and beautiful State can be less regarded than a few hundred lawless and worthless savages with their narrow Reservations.

What officer—what power—has authority to legalize crime and save the perpetrators? Can the execution of a few of the many guilty Indians expiate and satisfy the murder of hundreds of wives and daughters; the destruction of villages, and the desolation of whole counties? Is an Indian so valuable? Rather let the guilty perish; in the name of Justice, of Law, and of Duty—let the guilty all perish! Let their fate stand as a long and necessary example and warning to every tribe in the land—and forever!

Moreover, the immediate removal of the remaining Indians is an unavoidable necessity, as it will be a great social and political blessing. The last experiment upon their faith and worth has terminated. Henceforth, the White Man and the Indian are implacable enemies! *Death* will be their greeting! The one may again pretend to bury the scalping-knife and tomahawk, but the other will not bury his ride and revolver. The war-path shall no longer cross our fields, not the feathers indicative of murders be worn in our streets. Never will the disregarded cries of the victims of the late massacre cease to be heard in our ears; never will the flames of burning houses cease to glare upon our memory while an Indian, or the sign of an Indian, remains among us!—We feel that we have the right of retribution and protection from some source, and we trust



they will come from the Government. The slayers of infants, the ravishers of innocent girls, the desolators of homes, the faithless, brutal Indians must be taken from our doors, if they are to be fostered and patronized by ignorant Eastern influence! The well-being of both races urge the removal. The Indian record is before the world: we only ask that the Government act conscientiously with that awful record. And we speak not in the transitory excitement of our feeling, but in the maturity of our reflection and judgment.

**“Terriffic Scenes! Intense Excitement!” *St. Peter Tribune*. 8 December 1862. p. 1, col. 3-4. \***

On Thursday our community was startled by reports concerning the designs of many citizens in the Indian prisoners at Camp Lincoln. Thursday night was the witness the extinction of these prisoners from the face of the earth, and preparations equal to the magnitude of the occasion had been made and only needed the shadows of night to witness their complete success. Toward evening, small squads of people were seen moving on the road to Mankato; after sundown the tide increased, and well filled sleighs and other vehicles were heading in the same direction. There was an odor of blood in the air, and fearful havoc played in the imagination of the witness. At eight o’clock, the excitement reached a crisis, through a dispatch sent to Col. Wilkin by Col. Miller, the commandant at Camp Lincoln, demanding the assistance of the troops stationed here.

Rumors filled Mankato with bloodthirsty thousands, and the military were reported to be powerless in opposing the schemes of the organization. The cavalry companies under Captains Austin and Cox buckled on their sabers; the infantry under Capt. Skaro (?) received ammunition, and the whole started for the scene of the disturbance under command of Colonel Wilkin. Our citizens anxiously awaited the culmination of the project, and early on Friday morning news from the “infected district” began to arrive. It was ascertained that there had been a failure to connect, and the contemplated punishment of the murderers had fallen to the ground—a failure and abortion.

The vigilance of Col. Miller prevented the murder of these guilty—by now helpless enemies—and an execution which is desired by every citizen but not in the unauthorized and irregular form designed by the originators of the movement.

The whole affair ended in the arrest of some two hundred persons, and for the present, all danger of execution by mob-law is at an end.

Whiskey suffered, but powder was retained for another occasion.

**“Army Brutality Marked Death March To Fort Snelling After Indian Uprising In 1862.” Unknown Newspaper from Lac Qui Parle County. (The only citation on this document indicates that it was originally printed by an unknown newspaper from Lac Qui Parle county. I did not find the original source of this account from the unknown newspaper. \***

ARMY BRUTALITY MARKED DEATH MARCH TO FORT SNELLING AFTER INDIAN UPRISING IN 1862

by Mrs. Elsie Cavender

Editor's note: For several years, the Tribune has published items of Minnesota history prepared by the state historical society. This week Mrs. Elsie Cavender mailed the Tribune an account of the death of her great great grandmother at the hands of the soldiers.

She includes this note:

When we read articles in the Granite Falls Tribune and in the Historical Society Column they are always about Indians killing the white people. They never show the other side of the story, the Indians side. They were fighting for their land, and they were hungry. They Indian is always pictured as a ruthless killer, but we all know that some white people were just as ruthless, even more so, than the Indians, as shown by this account.

The Trib agrees with Mrs. Cavender that far too often the Indian is blamed for the many deaths and atrocities that took place during the settling period of this area. It is happy to publish her account of just one instance of brutality on the part of the invaders.

At the time of the Sioux outbreak in 1862 some of the Sioux people were driven out of Minnesota. A few of them escaped and went to Canada, but there were some who were not so fortunate, and they were captured and taken to Fort Snelling. Later they were shipped to Crow Creek (Nebraksa) or Chamberlain, South Dakota.

It was on the trip to Fort Snelling that my grandmother's maternal grandmother was killed by white soldiers.

My grandmother, Maza-Okiye-Win, or Isabella Roberts, was ten years old at the time of the outbreak and remembers distinctly every little detail of their experiences, as it was a horrible nightmarish trip. My grandfather, Inyang Mani Hoksida, was four years old at this time, but he was in the group that went to Canada.

I remember how heartbreaking it was for my grandmother to tell of this dreadful episode in her early life. A child at this age should have a happy life, but it was not so in this case. It took a lot of courage for her to tell of these things, and many times her eyes would fill with tears.

It was somewhere near New Ulm or Morton, that the incident of which I write took place. The name of the river where the killing took place is Wagaju-Wakpada (in Sioux language).

They were crossing a plank bridge which had no guard rails, and some of the people were riding on wagons or carts. It was when they got to the middle of the bridge that something went wrong, and they all got panicky, so my great-grandmother jumped out of the cart and took her little girl, Maza-Okiye-Win, and her mother out of the cart.

Soldiers were right behind them, prodding them on, and there were soldiers on each side, herding the people like cattle. When all this commotion took place with my great-grandmother and the others getting out of the cart, the soldiers all came up and demanded to know what was wrong. But of course, many of the people did not understand English, and I think this irritated the soldiers. They tried to push the women off the bridge but only succeeded in pushing the older ones off. Right away my great-grandmother went to her mother's rescue and got her out of the water, drenched to the skin. My great-grandmother wrapped her mother in her own dry shawl, and then they made their way back to the bridge where the rest of the party and the soldiers waited for them. To their dismay they found someone had driven off their cart, and they did not know what to do.

At this point the white soldiers came running toward the group shouting, and they grabbed the older woman and stabbed her with a saber or bayonet before the eyes of the whole party. As the poor woman screamed out in pain my great-grandmother ran to her, but her mother said, "Please daughter, go and don't bother with me, they are killing me." She was more afraid for her daughter, for she thought the same treatment would be given to her. As the soldiers came

toward her my great-grandmother remembered the little girl she had to care for, who was standing by watching, so she left her mother lying on the ground and went on with the others.

When the party stopped for the night my great-grandmother slipped away and went back to the place where her mother had been attacked, but she was not there, and she could not find the body. Years later when they came back to this territory, some of those who had escaped told of seeing the white soldiers dragging the body away from the bridge, but that was all they had seen.

Before the people were driven off in this death-march my great-grandmother had lost her husband. He also was killed by white soldiers, and this is how it happened.

During the outbreak Little Crow and his men burned down houses, churches, and the big warehouses where all the supplies for the agency were kept. They knocked everything down, tipped over big barrels of syrup and sugar and coffee were spilled all around. It was a place of pandemonium.

But some of the people, the Sisseton-Wahpetons, wanted peace. So they had a meeting, and appointed my great-grandmother's husband, Mazo-Mani, who was one of the chiefs at that time, to deliver a letter to headquarters, or to whoever was in charge. As they were going on this errand, carrying a white flag, they met a party of white soldiers, and one of them shot down Mazo-Mani even though he was carrying the flag of truce.

All this happened in just a short period of time, and my grandmother remembered all this distinctly. First the killing of her father, then her grandmother, by white soldiers. Of course she did not see the actual shooting of her father, but the rest of the party brought him back wounded and he died during the night.